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FAMILIAR HAUNTS

THE WONDER ROAD

Book I: Familiar Haunts
II: Enchanted Paths
III: Far Horizons

TREMBLING, THE PRINCE APPROACHED HER

FAMILIAR HAUNTS

Fairy Tales Selected by

EDWIN DILLER STARBUCK

Assisted by

Bernice Bauercamper, George Beiswanger, Elena M. Close,
Elizabeth Dawson, A. Kathryn Gunn, Ivy C. Husband,
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THE INSTITUTE OF CHARACTER RESEARCH
STATE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA

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FOREWORD

The stories in this volume are very old—so old that nobody knows exactly when they were ever new. In the days of Long Ago, people were already telling them to their children, and when the children grew up they told them to their children.

Stories are always coming and going. Most of them do not live long enough to grow up. They are told once or twice and are forgotten. Once in a long while a story happens on the scene that all of us—children and grown-ups alike—love from the first time we hear it. People tell it again and again. It gets better with the telling, for it catches the scent of the pines, the feel of open spaces, the warmth of the family circle, and the flavor of the camp fires around which the group gathers to tell and to listen.

This collection of stories is different. They are really and truly the best of their kind. You will never quite know the labor of love that has gone into the selection of these tales. A group of men and women familiar with the story-world, who know and like children, have put years into the happy task of bringing the tales together. You will find on the title page the names of the grown-ups who helped. Thousands of children have helped too; for they were asked to read many of the stories and to tell how much or how little they liked

them. The stories chosen for these three volumes are the ones the grown-ups and children agree are the very best of their kind. So here they are, three books full of happiness for you.

You will like the sixty-one stories in these three volumes so well that you will be hungry for more. That is well; for there are many other splendid fairy stories. Some of them are nearly as good as these. In fact we have found among the thousands of tales that have been written more than 400 so delightful that every boy and girl might well know them. How can you find them? The list has been put in a book you can secure from the publishers of this volume. It tells what each of the more than 400 stories is about, where you can secure it, how good it is, and what it is good for. That book is called "A Guide to Books for Character," Volume I, Fairy Tale, Myth, and Legend. When your parents travel about Europe they sometimes secure a Baedeker telling them all about the country they are to visit. They can by its use learn as much in a few days about the things they ought to see as by weeks of poking and prowling. Volume I of the Guide is a Baedeker to the Land of the Fairies.

These are fairy tales. Some of them are called myths. There are persons who consider them unreal because they are fanciful. You will not be deceived by such notions. Some fanciful things are more real and more precious than are the things you see and handle. A lovely flower, for example. The "beauty" of it, not its stalk or root or petal, is the part that is most real

and that you prize most. So with the "soul" of a piece of music or of your mother. These stories are among the choicest flowers in the garden of human culture. They blossom out of the souls of the peoples of the world who are in love with Beauty. You will not simply enjoy them. You will love them.

In this collection there are many debts of gratitude which may be put in words but can never be repaid: To those persons of ancient days and of our own time who have told the tales and so filled the earth with charming presences; to the Institute of Social and Religious Research of New York City which has by its munificence helped to keep the staff of experts at the task of discovering the choicest stories and of presenting them in this form; not least to all publishers of books in the English language for their coöperation and for granting permission to make free use of the stories that are theirs by ownership. The courtesy of the publishing houses was extended because they thought the collection an unusual one and because they are interested in the happiness and health of young people. The children of the world will join in our expression of gratitude to all those whose labor and beneficence have helped to build this Wonder Road.

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And, if we find our talisman,
. . . the elfin gate will open.

ALFRED NOYES.

It is the season now to go
About the country high and low,
Among the lilacs hand in hand,
And two by two in fairy land.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

FAMILIAR HAUNTS

THE BROWNIE OF BLEDNOCK

By Elizabeth Grierson

DID you ever hear how a brownie came to the village of Blednock, and was frightened away again?

Well, it was one summer evening, just when the milking was done and before the children were put to bed. The good people of Blednock were sitting on their doorsteps talking to their neighbors, and the children were laughing and playing in the dooryards.

All at once they heard a queer humming noise. It seemed to come from the riverside, far away. Nearer and nearer it sounded. The talking and laughing stopped, and every one looked toward the river.

And it was no wonder that they stared, for coming up the road was the strangest little creature that any one had ever seen.

He looked like a wee, wee man; and yet such a

strange man. For his bright red hair was long, and he had a long red beard. His knees knocked together when he walked, and his arms were so long that his hands almost touched the ground. A strange sight it was!

He was singing something over and over. And as he came nearer they could make out the words:

> Oh, my name is Aiken-Drum,
> And to do your work I've come.
> A bite to eat, a bed on hay,
> You may give; but nothing pay.

Oh! but I can tell you the people were frightened. The little ones screamed and the larger girls dropped the pails of milk they were carrying home. Even the dogs crept behind their masters; and the big boys, who should have known better, hooted at the little man.

"Did you ever see such eyes?" cried one. "How they twinkle as he walks along!"

"And look at his long beard!" said another; "who ever saw such a red beard before?"

But still the little man went slowly up the street, singing:

> Oh, my name is Aiken-Drum,
> And to do your work I've come.
> A bite to eat, a bed on hay,
> You may give; but nothing pay.

Granny Duncan was the oldest and kindest woman in the village. Oh, she was very old! She knew all the tales of the olden times.

"I think this is just a harmless brownie," she said. "Long ago I heard of brownies from my father's father. We will take Baby Meg to see him. If she smiles upon him, he is just a brownie. For babies always love brownies and know them when they see them."

She Put Out Her Tiny Hands

So Baby Meg was brought, and she laughed and crowed and put out her tiny hands to the strange little man.

"He is just a good, kind brownie!" cried Granny Duncan. "Many a long day's work will he do for people who treat him well."

Then everybody grew very brave and crowded around him. And when they were close to him they saw that his hairy face was kind, and that his big eyes had a merry twinkle in them.

"Can you not speak?" asked an old man. "Tell us where you come from."

"I cannot tell you where I came from," said the wee man. "My country has no name, and it is not at all like this land of yours. For there, we all learn to serve, while here, every one wishes to be served. We love to work. It sometimes happens that there is no work for us at home. Then one of us may come to your land, to see if you have need of him."

"Do you really like to work?" asked idle Tom, who was not troubled in that way. And his eyes looked almost as big as the brownie's.

"I love to serve," said the brownie. "He serves himself best who serves others most. If I am needed I will stay in this place a while. I do not want clothes or a bed or wages. All I ask for is a corner of the barn to sleep in and a bowl of broth at bedtime.

"If no one troubles me, I will be ready to help any one who needs me. I'll bring in the sheep from the hill. I'll gather the harvest by moonlight. I'll bake your bread on a busy day. I'll sing the babies to sleep in their cradles. The babies always love me."

No one knew what to say. A little man who would do everything for nothing! It could not be true!

There must be something wrong about it! Men began to whisper to each other. "Perhaps it would be better to have nothing to do with him," they said.

Then Granny Duncan spoke up again. "It's just a harmless brownie, I tell you," she said. "Have you not all complained about your hard work? Here is a good workman all ready for you. Will you turn him away just because he looks so queer?"

"But he will frighten strangers," said the young people. "Our friends will not come to the village if we let him stay. Then it will be lonely here. We will have no good times."

"Handsome is as handsome does," said Granny Duncan. "I have heard that a brownie can stack a whole ten-acre field of wheat in a single night."

"A ten-acre field in a single night! Just think of that!" said all the men. The miller told the brownie that he might sleep in a corner of his barn. Granny Duncan promised him a bowl of broth at bedtime.

Then all said good-night and went home, looking over their shoulders to see if the strange little man was following them. You may be very sure that no one lingered behind, that night. No one asked to stay outside just a little longer.

All the people of the village were a little afraid at first, but in a week there was another story to tell. For Aiken-Drum was the most wonderful worker that ever was seen, and the strange thing was that he did nearly all of his work at night.

If there was a tired baby to sing to sleep, or a house to be made tidy, or a churnful of cream that would not turn to butter, or bread that would not rise, Aiken-Drum always knew about it. He always came just at the right time.

He gathered the sheep together on stormy nights.

He carried home the heavy bundle for a tired man. He stacked the grain safely.

Many a time some poor mother would be up all night with a sick child. She would sit down in front of the fire and fall fast asleep.

When she awoke she would find that Aiken-Drum had made her a visit. For the floor would be scrubbed, the dishes washed, the fire made, and the kettle put on to boil.

But the little man would have slipped quietly away. He never waited to be thanked. It seemed just as if everybody had wishing-caps, for people had only to wish, and the work was done.

And the village was not lonely, oh, no! People came from everywhere to see if they could catch a glimpse of the strange little visitor.

But they never saw Aiken-Drum again. One could go to the miller's barn twenty times a day; and twenty times a day one would find nothing but a little heap of hay. The bowl that held his food was always empty in the morning, but no one ever saw the brownie supping the broth.

Little children were the only ones who ever saw him, and oh! how he loved them! Just before bedtime, they would gather around him in some quiet corner by the old mill.

Then the villagers would hear wonderful, low, sweet music. It was Aiken-Drum, singing the songs of his own land to the happy children.

And he might be there yet, gathering the harvest and helping tired people with their work; but some one forgot what the little man had said, over and over again, in his strange little song:

A bite to eat, a bed on hay,
You may give; but nothing pay.

You see, a brownie loves to give; he will not work for pay. But some one forgot this.

"I must make something for Aiken-Drum," said a poor woman whom he had helped. "He never will stay to let me thank him. Winter is coming on, and he will be cold in his old worn suit. I will make him a warm coat."

So she cut and sewed and pressed and made a little coat for the brownie. She told no one what she was doing; but one night she put the last stitch in the pretty little garment. Then she went softly to the miller's barn and laid it down beside the bowl of broth.

The villagers of Blednock never saw Aiken-Drum again. For a true brownie must work without reward; he cannot stay where he is paid. The strange little man was obliged to go away.

But sometimes the children hear his voice down by the old mill. It is always soft and low and sweet. He is singing the songs of his own land, just as he used to do when the little ones were gathered around him.

And then the good people in the village remember his kind deeds and his strange saying, "He serves himself best who serves others most."

From *Happy Holidays* (Rand, McNally and Company, Chicago, 1921), compiled by Frances G. Wickes, a collection of eighty-three stories suitable for use in celebration of the various holidays. "The Brownie of Blednock" is reprinted by permission of the Frederick A. Stokes Company.

CINDERELLA

By Dinah Mulock Craik

THERE was once an honest gentleman who took for his second wife a lady, the proudest and most disagreeable in the whole country. She had two daughters exactly like herself in all things. He also had one little girl, who resembled her dead mother, the best woman in all the world. Scarcely had the second marriage taken place than the stepmother became jealous of the good qualities of the little girl, who was so great a contrast to her own two daughters. She gave her all the menial occupations of the house —compelled her to wash the floors and staircases, to dust the bedrooms, and clean the grates; and while her sisters occupied carpeted chambers hung with mirrors, where they could see themselves from head to foot, this poor little damsel was sent to sleep in an attic, on an old straw mattress, with only one chair and not a looking-glass in the room.

She suffered all in silence, not daring to complain to her father, who was entirely ruled by his new wife. When her daily work was done, she sat down in the chimney corner among the ashes; because of this the two sisters gave her the nickname "Cinderella." But Cinderella, however shabbily clad, was handsomer than they were with all their fine clothes.

It happened that the king's son gave a series of balls, to which were invited all the rank and fashion of the

city, and among the rest the two elder sisters. They were very proud and happy, and occupied their whole time in deciding what they should wear; a source of new trouble to Cinderella, whose duty it was to get up their fine linen and laces, and who never could please them however much she tried. They talked of nothing but their clothes.

"I," said the elder, "shall wear my velvet gown and my trimmings of English lace."

"And I," added the younger, "will have but my ordinary silk petticoat, but I shall adorn it with an upper skirt of flowered brocade, and shall put on my diamond tiara, which is a great deal finer than anything of yours."

Here the elder sister grew angry, and the dispute began to run so high that Cinderella, who was known to have excellent taste, was called upon to decide between them. She gave them the best advice she could, and gently and submissively offered to dress them herself, and especially to arrange their hair—an accomplishment in which she excelled many a noted coiffeur. The important evening came, and she exercised all her skill to adorn the two young ladies. While she was combing out the elder's hair, this ill-natured girl said sharply, "Cinderella, do you not wish you were going to the ball?"

"Ah, madam" (they obliged her always to say "madam"), "you are only mocking me; it is not my fortune to have any such pleasure."

"You are right: people would only laugh to see a little cinder-wench at a ball."

Any other than Cinderella would have dressed the hair all awry; but she was good, and dressed it perfectly even and smooth, and as prettily as she could.

The sisters had scarcely eaten for two days, and had

broken a dozen stay-laces a day in trying to make themselves slender; but to-night they broke a dozen more, and lost their tempers over and over again before they had completed their toilet. When at last the happy moment arrived, Cinderella followed them to the coach; after it had whirled them away, she sat down by the kitchen fire and cried.

Immediately her godmother, who was a fairy, appeared beside her. "What are you crying for, my little maid?"

"Oh, I wish—I wish—" Her sobs stopped her.

"You wish to go to the ball; isn't it so?"

Cinderella nodded.

"Well, then, be a good girl, and you shall go. First run into the garden and fetch me the largest pumpkin you can find."

Cinderella did not comprehend what this had to do with her going to the ball, but being obedient and obliging she went. Her godmother took the pumpkin, and having scooped out all its inside, struck it with her wand: it became a splendid gilt coach, lined with rose-colored satin.

"Now fetch me the mouse-trap out of the pantry, my dear."

Cinderella brought it; it contained six of the fattest, sleekest mice. The fairy lifted up the wire door, and as each mouse ran out she struck it and changed it into a beautiful black horse.

"But what shall I do for your coachman, Cinderella?"

Cinderella suggested that she had seen a large black rat in the rat-trap, and he might serve for want of better.

"You are right; go and look again for him."

He was found, and the fairy made him into a most

respectable coachman, with the finest whiskers imaginable. She afterwards took six lizards from behind the pumpkin frame, and changed them into six footmen, all in splendid livery, who immediately jumped up behind the carriage, as if they had been footmen all their days. "Well, Cinderella, now you can go to the ball."

"What, in these clothes?" said Cinderella piteously, looking down on her ragged frock.

Her godmother laughed, and touched her also with the wand; at which her wretched threadbare jacket became stiff with gold and sparkling with jewels; her woolen petticoat lengthened into a gown of sweeping satin, from underneath which peeped out her little feet, no longer bare, but covered with silk stockings and the prettiest glass slippers in the world. "Now, Cinderella, depart; but remember, if you stay one instant after midnight, your carriage will become a pumpkin, your coachman a rat, your horses mice, and your footmen lizards; while you yourself will be the little cinder-wench you were an hour ago."

Cinderella promised without fear, her heart was so full of joy.

Arrived at the palace, the king's son, whom some one, probably the fairy, had told to await the coming of an uninvited princess whom nobody knew, was standing at the entrance, ready to receive her. He offered her his hand, and led her with the utmost courtesy through the assembled guests, who stood aside to let her pass, whispering to one another, "Oh, how beautiful she is!" It might have turned the head of anyone but poor Cinderella, who was so used to being despised that she took it all as if it were something happening in a dream.

Her triumph was complete; even the old king said

HER GODMOTHER APPEARED BEFORE HER

to the queen that never since her majesty's young days had he seen so charming and elegant a person. All the court ladies scanned her eagerly, clothes and all, determining to have theirs made next day of exactly the same pattern. The king's son himself led her out to dance, and she danced so gracefully that he admired her more and more. Indeed, at supper, which was fortunately early, his admiration quite took away his appetite. As for Cinderella herself, with an involuntary shyness she sought out her sisters, placed herself beside them and offered them all sorts of civil attentions, which, coming as they supposed from a stranger, and so magnificent a lady, almost overwhelmed them with delight.

While she was talking with them, she heard the clock strike a quarter to twelve, and making a courteous adieu to the royal family, she reëntered her carriage, escorted tenderly by the king's son, and arrived in safety at her own door. There she found her godmother, who smiled approval, and of whom she begged permission to go to a second ball, the following night, to which the queen had earnestly invited her.

While she was talking, the two sisters were heard knocking at the gate, and the fairy godmother vanished, leaving Cinderella sitting in the chimney corner, rubbing her eyes and pretending to be very sleepy.

"Ah," cried the eldest sister maliciously, "it has been the most delightful ball; and there was present the most beautiful princess I ever saw, who was so exceedingly polite to us both."

"Was she?" said Cinderella indifferently; "and who might she be?"

"Nobody knows, though everybody would give their eyes to know, especially the king's son."

"Indeed!" replied Cinderella, a little more in-

terested; "I should like to see her. Miss Javotte"—that was the elder sister's name—"will you not let me go to-morrow, and lend me your yellow gown that you wear on Sundays?"

"What, lend my yellow gown to a cinder-wench! I am not so mad as that." At which refusal Cinderella did not complain, for if her sister really had lent her the gown she would have been considerably embarrassed.

The next night came, and the two young ladies, richly dressed in different toilets, went to the ball. Cinderella, more splendidly attired and beautiful than ever, followed them shortly after. "Now remember twelve o'clock," was her godmother's parting speech, and she thought she certainly should. But the prince's attentions to her were greater even than during the first evening, and in the delight of listening to his pleasant conversation time slipped by unperceived. While she was sitting beside him in a lovely alcove, and looking at the moon from under a bower of orange blossoms, she heard a clock strike the first stroke of twelve. She started up, and fled away as lightly as a deer.

Amazed, the prince followed, but could not catch her. Indeed he missed his lovely princess altogether, and only saw running out of the palace doors a little dirty lass whom he had never beheld before, and of whom he certainly would never have taken the least notice. Cinderella arrived at home breathless and weary, ragged and cold, without carriage, or footmen, or coachman—the only remnant of her past magnificence being one of her little glass slippers; the other she had dropped in the ballroom as she ran away.

When the two sisters returned they were full of this

strange adventure: how the beautiful lady had appeared at the ball more beautiful than ever, and enchanted every one who looked at her; and how as the clock was striking twelve she had suddenly risen up and fled through the ballroom, disappearing no one knew how or where, and dropping one of her glass slippers behind her in her flight; how the king's son had remained in-

consolable until he chanced to pick up the little glass slipper, which he carried away in his pocket, and was seen to take it out continually and look at it affectionately, with the air of a man very much in love; in fact, from his behavior during the remainder of the evening, all the court and royal family were convinced that he had become desperately enamoured of the wearer of the little glass slipper.

Cinderella listened in silence, turning her face to the kitchen fire, and perhaps it was that which made her look so rosy; but nobody ever noticed or admired her

at home, so it did not signify, and next morning she went to her weary work again just as before.

A few days after the whole city was attracted by the sight of a herald going around with a little glass slipper in his hand, publishing, with a flourish of trumpets, that the king's son ordered this to be fitted on the foot of every lady in the kingdom, and that he wished to marry the lady whom it fitted best, or to whom it and the fellow slipper belonged. Princesses, duchesses, countesses, and simple gentlewomen all tried it on, but being a fairy slipper it fitted nobody; and besides, nobody could produce its fellow slipper, which lay all the time safely in the pocket of Cinderella's old linsey gown.

At last the herald came to the house of the two sisters, and though they well knew neither of themselves was the beautiful lady, they made every attempt to get their clumsy feet into the glass slipper, but in vain.

"Let me try it on," said Cinderella from the chimney corner.

"What, you?" cried the others, bursting into shouts of laughter; but Cinderella only smiled, and held out her hand.

Her sisters could not prevent her, since the command was that every young maiden in the city should try on the slipper, in order that no chance might be left untried, for the prince was nearly breaking his heart; and his father and mother were afraid that, though a prince, he would actually die for love of the beautiful unknown lady.

So the herald bade Cinderella sit down on a three-legged stool in the kitchen, and himself put the slipper on her pretty little foot, which it fitted exactly. She then drew from her pocket the fellow slipper, which she also put on, and stood up—for with the touch of

the magic shoes all her dress was changed likewise—no longer the poor despised cinder-wench, but the beautiful lady whom the king's son loved.

Her sisters recognized her at once. Filled with astonishment, mingled with no little alarm, they threw themselves at her feet, begging her pardon for all their former unkindness. She raised and embraced them; told them she forgave them with all her heart, and only hoped they would love her always. Then she departed with the herald to the king's palace, and told her whole story to his majesty and the royal family, who were not in the least surprised, for everybody believed in fairies, and everybody longed to have a fairy godmother.

For the young prince, he found her more lovely and lovable than ever, and insisted upon marrying her immediately. Cinderella never went home again, but she sent for her two sisters to come to the palace, and with the consent of all parties married them shortly afterwards to two rich gentlemen of the court.

From Mrs. Craik's *The Fairy Book,* which includes thirty-five familiar fairy tales retold with a wealth of detail. Reprinted by permission of Thomas Nelson and Sons, New York.

THE ELVES AND THE SHOEMAKER

By the Brothers Grimm

THERE was once a shoemaker who worked very hard and was very honest; but still he could not earn enough to live upon, and at last all he had in the world was gone, except just leather enough to make one pair of shoes. Then he cut them all ready to make up the next day, meaning to get up early in the morning to work. His conscience was clear and his heart light amidst all his troubles; so he went peaceably to bed, left all his cares to heaven, and fell asleep. In the morning, after he had said his prayers, he set himself down to his work, when, to his great wonder, there stood the shoes, all ready made, upon the table. The good man knew not what to say or think of this strange event. He looked at the workmanship; there was not one false stitch in the whole job, and all was so neat and true, that it was a complete masterpiece.

That same day a customer came in, and the shoes pleased him so well that he willingly paid a price higher than usual for them; and the poor shoemaker with the money bought leather enough to make two pairs more. In the evening he cut out the work, and went to bed early that he might get up and begin be-

times next day; but he was saved all the trouble, for when he got up in the morning the work was finished ready to his hand. Presently in came buyers, who paid him handsomely for his goods, so that he bought leather enough for four pairs more. He cut out the work again over night, and found it finished in the morning as before; and so it went on for some time: what was got ready in the evening was always done by daybreak, and the good man soon became thriving and prosperous again.

One evening about Christmas time, as he and his wife were sitting over the fire chatting together, he said to her, "I should like to sit up and watch to-night, that we may see who it is that comes and does my work for me." The wife liked the thought; so they left a light burning, and hid themselves in the corner of the room behind a curtain that was hung up there, and watched what should happen.

As soon as it was midnight, there came two little naked dwarfs; and they sat themselves upon the shoemaker's bench, took up all the work that was cut out, and began to ply with their little fingers, stitching and rapping and tapping away at such a rate, that the shoemaker was all amazement, and could not take his eyes off for a moment. And on they went till the job was quite finished, and the shoes stood ready for use upon the table. This was long before daybreak; and then they bustled away as quick as lightning.

The next day the wife said to the shoemaker, "These little wights have made us rich, and we ought to be thankful to them, and do them a good office in return. I am quite vexed to see them run about as they do; they have nothing upon their backs to keep off the cold. I'll tell you what, I will make each of them a shirt, and a coat and waistcoat, and a pair of pantaloons into the

bargain; do you make each of them a little pair of shoes."

The thought pleased the good shoemaker very much; and one evening, when all the things were ready, they laid them on the table instead of the work that they used to cut out, and then went and hid themselves to watch what the little elves would do. About midnight they came in, and were going to sit down to their work as usual; but when they saw the clothes lying there they laughed and were greatly delighted. Then they dressed themselves in the twinkling of an eye, and danced and capered and sprang about as merry as could be, till at last they danced out at the door over the green; and the shoemaker saw them no more; but everything went well with him from that time forward, as long as he lived.

One of the fifty-five rugged German fairy tales in *Popular Stories* by the Brothers Grimm. Reprinted by permission of the Oxford University Press, New York.

THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES

By Hans Christian Andersen

MANY years ago there lived an emperor, who cared so enormously for beautiful new clothes that he spent all his money upon them, that he might be very fine. He did not care about his soldiers, not about the theater, nor about driving in the park except to show his new clothes. He had a coat for every hour of the day; and just as they say of a king, "He is in council," one always said of him, "The emperor is in the wardrobe."

In the great city in which he lived it was always very merry; every day a number of strangers arrived there. One day two cheats came: they gave themselves out as weavers, and declared that they could weave the finest stuff anyone could imagine. Not only were their colors and patterns, they said, uncommonly beautiful,

but the clothes made of the stuff possessed the wonderful quality that they became invisible to anyone who was unfit for the office he held, or was incorrigibly stupid.

"Those would be capital clothes!" thought the emperor. "If I wore those, I should be able to find out what men in my empire are not fit for the places they have; I could distinguish the clever from the stupid. Yes, the stuff must be woven for me directly!"

And he gave the two cheats a great deal of cash in hand, that they might begin their work at once.

As for them, they put up two looms, and pretended to be working; but they had nothing at all on their looms. They demanded the finest silk and the costliest gold; this they put into their own pockets, and worked at the empty looms till late into the night.

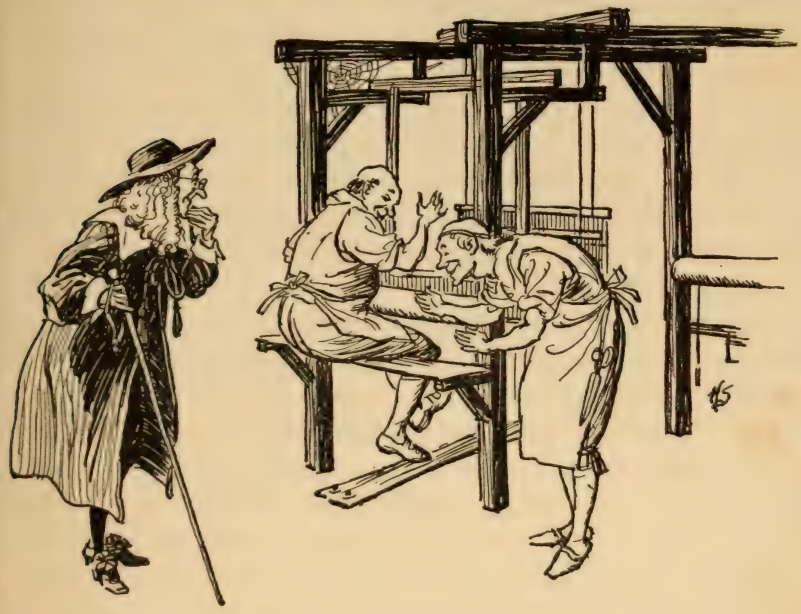
"I should like to know how far they have got on with the stuff," thought the emperor. But he felt quite uncomfortable when he thought that those who were not fit for their offices could not see it. He believed, indeed, that he had nothing to fear for himself, but yet he preferred first to send some one else to see how matters stood. All the people in the whole city knew what peculiar power the stuff possessed, and all were anxious to see how bad or how stupid their neighbors were.

"I will send my honest old minister to the weavers," thought the emperor. "He can judge best how the stuff looks, for he has sense, and no one discharges his office better than he."

Now the good old minister went out into the hall where the two cheats sat working at the empty looms.

"Mercy preserve us!" thought the old minister, and he opened his eyes wide. "I cannot see anything at all!" But he did not say this.

Both the cheats begged him to be kind enough to come nearer, and asked if he did not approve of the colors and the pattern. They pointed to the empty loom, and the poor old minister went on opening his eyes; but he could see nothing, for there was nothing to see.



"Mercy!" thought he, "can I indeed be so stupid? I never thought that, and not a soul must know it. Am I not fit for my office?—No, it will never do for me to tell that I could not see the stuff."

"Do you say nothing to it?" said one of the weavers.

"Oh, it is charming—quite enchanting!" answered the old minister, as he peered through his spectacles. "What a fine pattern, and what colors! Yes, I shall tell the emperor that I am very much pleased with it."

"Well, we are glad of that," said both the weavers;

and then they named the colors, and explained the strange pattern. The old minister listened attentively, that he might be able to repeat it when he went back to the emperor. And he did so.

Now the cheats asked for more money, and more silk and gold, which they declared they wanted for weaving. They put all into their own pockets, and not a thread was put upon the loom; but they continued to work at the empty frames as before.

The emperor soon sent again, dispatching another honest statesman, to see how the weaving was going on, and if the stuff would soon be ready. He fared just like the first; he looked and looked, but, as there was nothing to be seen but the empty looms, he could see nothing.

"Is not that a pretty piece of stuff?" asked the two cheats; and they displayed and explained the handsome pattern which was not there at all.

"I am not stupid!" thought the man—"it must be my good office, for which I am not fit. It is funny enough, but I must not let it be noticed." And so he praised the stuff which he did not see, and expressed his pleasure at the beautiful colors and the charming pattern. "Yes, it is enchanting," he said to the emperor.

All the people in the town were talking of the gorgeous stuff. The emperor wished to see it himself while it was still upon the loom. With a whole crowd of chosen men, among whom were also the two honest statesmen who had already been there, he went to the two cunning cheats, who were now weaving with might and main without fiber or thread.

"What's this?" thought the emperor. "I can see nothing at all! That is terrible. Am I stupid? Am I not fit to be emperor? That would be the most dreadful thing that could happen to me.—Oh, it is *very*

pretty!" he said aloud. "It has our exalted approbation." And he nodded in a contented way, and gazed at the empty loom, for he would not say that he saw nothing. The whole suite whom he had with him looked and looked, and saw nothing, any more than the rest; but, like the emperor, they said, "That *is* pretty!" and counseled him to wear these splendid new clothes for the first time at the great procession that was presently to take place. "It is splendid, tasteful, excellent!" went from mouth to mouth. On all sides there seemed to be general rejoicing, and the emperor gave each of the cheats a cross to hang at his buttonhole, and the title of Imperial Court Weaver.

The whole night before the morning on which the procession was to take place the cheats were up, and had lighted more than sixteen candles. The people could see that they were hard at work, completing the emperor's new clothes. They pretended to take the stuff down from the loom; they made cuts in the air with great scissors; they sewed with needles without thread; and at last they said, "Now the clothes are ready!"

The emperor came himself with his noblest cavaliers; and the two cheats lifted up one arm as if they were holding something, and said, "See, here are the trousers! here is the coat! here is the cloak!" and so on. "It is as light as a spider's web: one would think one had nothing on; but that is just the beauty of it."

"Yes," said all the cavaliers; but they could not see anything, for nothing was there.

"Does your imperial majesty please to condescend to undress?" said the cheats; "then we will put on you the new clothes—here in front of the great mirror."

The emperor took off his clothes, and the cheats pretended to put on him each of the new garments, and

they took him round the waist, and seemed to fasten on something; that was the train; and the emperor turned round and round before the mirror.

"Oh, how well they look! how capitally they fit!" said all. "What a pattern! what colors! That is a splendid dress!"

"They are standing outside with the canopy which is to be borne above your majesty in the procession!" announced the head master of ceremonies.

"Well, I am ready," replied the emperor. "Does it not suit me well?" And then he turned again to the mirror, for he wanted it to appear as if he contemplated his adornment with great interest.

The chamberlains, who were to carry the train, stooped down with their hands toward the floor, just as if they were picking up the mantle; then they pretended to be holding something up in the air. They did not dare to let it be noticed that they saw nothing.

So the emperor went in procession under the rich canopy, and every one in the streets said, "How incomparable are the emperor's new clothes! what a train he has to his mantle! how it fits him!" No one would let it be perceived that he could see nothing, for that would have shown that he was not fit for his office, or was very stupid. No clothes of the emperor's had ever had such a success as these.

"But he has nothing on!" a little child cried out at last.

"Just hear what that innocent says!" said the father; and one whispered to another what the child had said. "There is a little child that says he has nothing on."

"But he has nothing on!" said the whole people at length. And the emperor shivered, for it seemed to him that they were right; but he thought within himself, "I must go through with the procession." And so he

carried himself still more proudly, and the chamberlains held on tighter than ever, and carried the train which did not exist at all.

One of sixty stories in *Fairy Tales and Other Stories* by Hans Christian Andersen. Reprinted from the edition of W. A. and J. K. Craigie by permission of the Oxford University Press, New York.

THE FIR TREE

By Hans Christian Andersen

OUT in the forest stood a pretty little Fir Tree. It had a good place; it could have sunlight, air there was in plenty, and all around grew many larger comrades—pines as well as firs. But the little Fir Tree was in such a hurry to grow. It did not care for the warm sun and the fresh air; it took no notice of the peasant children, who went about talking together, when they had come out to look for strawberries and raspberries. Often they came with a whole potful, or had strung berries on a straw; then they would sit down by the little Fir Tree and say, "How pretty and small that one is!" and the Tree did not like to hear that at all.

"Oh, if I were only as great a tree as the others!" sighed the little Fir, "then I would spread my branches far around, and look out from my crown into the wide world. The birds would then build nests in my boughs, and when the wind blew I could nod just as grandly as the others yonder."

It took no pleasure in the sunshine, in the birds, and

in the red clouds that went sailing over it morning and evening.

When it was winter, and the snow lay all around, white and sparkling, a hare would often come jumping along, and spring right over the little Fir Tree. Oh! this made it so angry. But two winters went by, and when the third came the little Tree had grown so tall that the hare was obliged to run round it.

"Oh! to grow, to grow, and become old; that's the only fine thing in the world," thought the Tree.

In the autumn woodcutters always came and felled a few of the largest trees; that happened every year, and the little Fir Tree, that was now quite well grown, shuddered with fear, for the great stately trees fell to the ground with a crash, and their branches were cut off, so that the tree looked quite naked, long and slender —they could hardly be recognized. But then they were laid upon wagons, and horses dragged them away out of the wood. Where were they going? What destiny awaited them?

In the spring, when the Swallows and the Stork came, the Tree asked them, "Do you know where they were taken? Did you not meet them?"

The Swallows knew nothing about it, but the Stork looked thoughtful, nodded his head, and said,

"Yes, I think so. I met many new ships when I flew out of Egypt; on the ships were stately masts; I fancy that these were the trees. They smelt like fir. I can assure you they're stately—very stately."

"Oh that I were only big enough to go over the sea! What kind of thing is this sea, and how does it look?"

"It would take too long to explain all that," said the Stork, and he went away.

"Rejoice in thy youth," said the Sunbeams; "rejoice

in thy fresh growth, and in the young life that is within thee."

And the Wind kissed the Tree, and the Dew wept tears upon it; but the Fir Tree did not understand that.

When Christmas time approached, quite young trees were felled, sometimes trees which were neither so old nor so large as this Fir Tree, that never rested but always wanted to go away. These young trees, which were the most beautiful, kept all their green branches; they were put upon wagons, and horses dragged them away out of the wood.

"Where are they all going?" asked the Fir Tree. "They are not greater than I—indeed, one of them was much smaller. Why do they keep all their branches? Whither are they taken?"

"We know that! We know that!" chirped the Sparrows. "Yonder in the town we looked in at the windows. We know where they go. Oh! they are dressed up in the greatest pomp and splendor that can be imagined. We have looked in at the windows, and have perceived that they are planted in the middle of the warm room, and adorned with the most beautiful things —gilt apples, honey cakes, playthings, and many hundreds of candles."

"And then?" asked the Fir Tree, and trembled through all its branches. "And then? What happens then?"

"Why, we have not seen anything more. But it was incomparable."

"Perhaps I may be destined to tread this glorious path one day!" cried the Fir Tree rejoicingly. "That is even better than traveling across the sea. How painfully I long for it! If it were only Christmas now! Now I am great and grown up, like the rest who were led away last year. Oh, if I were only on the carriage!

If I were only in the warm room, among all the pomp and splendor! And then? Yes, then something even better will come, something far more charming, or else why should they adorn me so? There must be something grander, something greater still to come, but what? Oh! I'm suffering, I'm longing! I don't know myself what is the matter with me!"

"Rejoice in us," said Air and Sunshine. "Rejoice in thy fresh youth here in the woodland."

But the Fir Tree did not rejoice at all, but it grew and grew; winter and summer it stood there, green, dark green. The people who saw it said, "That's a handsome tree!" and at Christmas time it was felled before any one of the others. The axe cut deep into its marrow, and the Tree fell to the ground with a sigh; it felt a pain, a sensation of faintness, and could not think at all of happiness, for it was sad at parting from its home, from the place where it had grown up; it knew that it should never again see the dear old companions, the little bushes and flowers all around—perhaps not even the birds. The parting was not at all agreeable.

The Tree only came to itself when it was unloaded in a yard, with other trees, and heard a man say,

"This one is famous; we only want this one!"

Now two servants came in gay liveries, and carried the Fir Tree into a large beautiful salon. All around the walls hung pictures, and by the great stove stood large Chinese vases with lions on the covers; there were rocking-chairs, silken sofas, great tables covered with picture books, and toys worth a hundred times a hundred dollars, at least the children said so. And the Fir Tree was put into a great tub filled with sand; but no one could see that it was a tub, for it was hung round with green cloth, and stood on a large many-colored carpet. Oh, how the Tree trembled! What was to

happen now? The servants, and the young ladies also, decked it out. On one branch they hung little nets, cut out of colored paper; every net was filled with sweetmeats; golden apples and walnuts hung down as if they grew there, and more than a hundred little candles, red, white, and blue, were fastened to the different boughs. Dolls that looked exactly like real people—the Tree had never seen such before—swung among the foliage, and high on the summit of the Tree

was fixed a tinsel star. It was splendid, particularly splendid.

"This evening," said all, "this evening it will shine."

"Oh that it were evening!" thought the Tree. "Oh that the lights may be soon lit up! What will happen then? I wonder if trees will come out of the forest to look at me? Will the Sparrows fly against the panes? Shall I grow fast here, and stand adorned in summer and winter?"

At last the candles were lighted. What a brilliance, what splendor! The Tree trembled so in all its

branches that one of the candles set fire to a green twig, and it was really painful.

"Heaven preserve us!" cried the young ladies; and they hastily put the fire out.

Now the Tree might not even tremble. Oh, that was terrible! It was so afraid of losing any of its ornaments and it was quite bewildered with all the brilliance. And now the folding doors were thrown open, and a number of children rushed in as if they would have overturned the whole Tree; the older people followed more deliberately. The little ones stood quite silent, but only for a minute; then they shouted till the room rang: they danced gleefully round the Tree, and one present after another was plucked from it.

"What are they about?" thought the Tree. "What's going to be done?"

And the candles burned down to the twigs, and as they burned down they were extinguished, and then the children received permission to plunder the Tree. Oh! they rushed in upon it, so that every branch cracked again: if it had not been fastened by the top and by the golden star to the ceiling, it would have fallen down.

The children danced about with their pretty toys. No one looked at the Tree except the old nursemaid, who came up and peeped among the branches, but only to see if a fig or an apple had not been forgotten.

"A story! a story!" shouted the children, and they drew a little fat man toward the Tree; and he sat down just beneath it—"for then we shall be in the green wood," said he, "and the tree may have the advantage of listening to my tale. But I can only tell one. Will you hear the story of Ivede-Avede, or of Humpty-Dumpty, who fell downstairs, and still was raised up to honor and married the princess?"

"Ivede-Avede!" cried some, "Humpty-Dumpty!" cried others, and there was a great crying and shouting. Only the Fir Tree was quite silent, and thought, "Shall I not be in it? Shall I have nothing to do in it?" But it had been in the evening's amusement, and had done what was required of it.

And the fat man told about Humpty-Dumpty, who fell downstairs, and yet was raised to honor and married the princess. And the children clapped their hands, and cried, "Tell another! tell another!" for they wanted to hear about Ivede-Avede; but they only got the story of Humpty-Dumpty. The Fir Tree stood quite silent and thoughtful; never had the birds in the wood told such a story as that. Humpty-Dumpty fell downstairs, and yet came to honor and married the princess!

"Yes, so it happens in the world!" thought the Fir Tree, and believed it must be true, because that was such a nice man who told it. "Well, who can know? Perhaps I shall fall downstairs too, and marry a princess!" And it looked forward with pleasure to being adorned again, the next evening, with candles and toys, gold and fruit. "To-morrow I shall not tremble," it thought. "I will rejoice in all my splendor. To-morrow I shall hear the story of Humpty-Dumpty again, and, perhaps, that of Ivede-Avede too."

And the Tree stood all night quiet and thoughtful.

In the morning the servants and the chambermaid came in.

"Now my splendor will begin afresh," thought the Tree. But they dragged it out of the room, and upstairs to the garret, and here put it in a dark corner where no daylight shone.

"What's the meaning of this?" thought the Tree.

"What am I to do here? What am I to get to know here?"

SCHOOLS C1467

And he leaned against the wall, and thought and thought. And he had time enough, for days and nights went by, and nobody came up; and when at length some one came, it was only to put some great boxes in a corner. Now the Tree stood quite hidden away, and one would think that it was quite forgotten.

"Now, it's winter outside," thought the Tree. "The earth is hard and covered with snow, and people cannot plant me; therefore I suppose I'm to be sheltered here until spring comes. How considerate that is! How good people are! If it were only not so dark here, so terribly solitary!—not even a little hare! It was pretty out there in the wood, when the snow lay thick and the hare sprang past; yes, even when he jumped over me, although I did not like that at the time. It is terribly lonely up here!"

"Piep! piep!" said a little Mouse, and crept forward, and then came another little one. They smelt at the Fir Tree, and then slipped among the branches.

"It's horribly cold," said the two little Mice, "or else it would be comfortable here. Don't you think so, you old Fir Tree?"

"I'm not old at all," said the Fir Tree. "There are many much older than I."

"Where do you come from?" asked the Mice. "And what do you know?" They were dreadfully inquisitive. "Tell us about the most beautiful spot on earth. Have you been there? Have you been in the storeroom, where cheeses lie on the shelves, and hams hang from the ceiling, where one dances on tallow candles, and goes in thin and comes out fat?"

"I don't know that," replied the Tree; "but I know

the wood, where the sun shines, and where the birds sing."

And then it told all about its youth.

And the little Mice had never heard anything of the kind; and they listened and said,

"What a number of things you have seen! How happy you must have been!"

"I?" said the Fir Tree; and it thought about what it had told. "Yes, those were really quite happy times." But then it told of the Christmas Eve, when it had been hung with sweetmeats and candles.

"Oh!" said the little Mice, "how happy you have been, you old Fir Tree!"

"I'm not old at all," said the Tree. "I only came out of the wood this winter. I'm in my very best years."

"What splendid stories you can tell!" said the little Mice.

And next night they came with four other little Mice, to hear what the Tree had to relate; and the more it said, the more clearly did it remember everything, and thought, "Those were quite merry days! But they may come again. Humpty-Dumpty fell downstairs, and yet he married the princess. Perhaps I may marry a princess too!" And then the Fir Tree thought of a pretty little birch tree that grew out in the forest: for the Fir Tree, that birch was a real princess.

"Who's Humpty-Dumpty?" asked the little Mice.

And then the Fir Tree told the whole story. It could remember every single word; and the little Mice were ready to leap to the very top of the tree with pleasure. Next night a great many more Mice came, and on Sunday two Rats even appeared; but these thought the story was not pretty, and the little Mice were sorry for that, for now they also did not like it so much as before.

"Do you only know one story?" asked the Rats,

"Only that one," replied the Tree. "I heard that on the happiest evening of my life; I did not think then how happy I was."

"That's an exceedingly poor story. Don't you know any about bacon and tallow candles—a storeroom story?"

"No," said the Tree.

"Then we'd rather not hear you," said the Rats.

And they went back to their own people. The little Mice at last stayed away also; and then the Tree sighed and said,

"It was very nice when they sat round me, the merry little Mice, and listened when I spoke to them. Now

that's past too. But I shall remember to be pleased when they take me out."

But when did that happen? Why, it was one morning that people came and rummaged in the garret; the boxes were put away, and the Tree brought out; they certainly threw it rather roughly on the floor, but a servant dragged it away at once to the stairs, where the daylight shone.

"Now life is beginning again," thought the Tree.

It felt the fresh air and the first sunbeams, and now it was out in the courtyard. Everything passed so quickly that the Tree quite forgot to look at itself, there was so much to look at all around. The courtyard was

close to a garden, and here everything was blooming; the roses hung fresh and fragrant over the little paling, the linden trees were in blossom, and the swallows cried, "Quirre-virre-vit! my husband's come!" But it was not the Fir Tree that they meant.

"Now I shall live!" said the Tree, rejoicing, and spread its branches far out; but, alas! they were all withered and yellow; and it lay in the corner among nettles and weeds. The tinsel star was still upon it, and shone in the bright sunshine.

In the courtyard a couple of the merry children were playing, who had danced round the tree at Christmas time, and had rejoiced over it. One of the youngest ran up and tore off the golden star.

"Look what is sticking to the ugly old fir tree," said the child, and he trod upon the branches till they cracked again under his boots.

And the Tree looked at all the blooming flowers and the splendor of the garden, and then looked at itself and wished it had remained in the dark corner of the garret; it thought of its fresh youth in the wood, of the merry Christmas Eve, and of the little Mice which had listened so pleasantly to the story of Humpty-Dumpty.

"Past! past!" said the poor Tree. "Had I but rejoiced when I could have done so! Past! Past!"

And the servant came and chopped the Tree into little pieces; a whole bundle lay there: it blazed brightly under the great brewing copper, and it sighed deeply, and each sigh was like a little shot; and the children who were at play there ran up and seated themselves at the fire, looked into it, and cried, "Puff! puff!" But at each explosion, which was a deep sigh, the Tree thought of a summer day in the woods, or of a winter night there, when the stars beamed; it thought

of Christmas Eve and of Humpty-Dumpty, the only story it had ever heard or knew how to tell; and then the Tree was burned.

The boys played in the garden, and the youngest had on his breast a golden star, which the Tree had worn on its happiest evening. Now that was past, and the Tree's life was past, and the story is past too; past! past!—and that's the way with all stories.

One of the sixty *Fairy Tales and Other Stories* edited by W. A. and J. K. Craigie. Reprinted by permission of the Oxford University Press, New York.

THE FISHERMAN AND HIS WIFE

By the Brothers Grimm

THERE was once a fisherman who lived with his wife in a ditch close by the seaside. The fisherman used to go out all day long a-fishing; and one day, as he sat on the shore with his rod, looking at the shining water and watching his line, all of a sudden his float was dragged away deep under the sea: and in drawing it up he pulled a great fish out of the water. The fish said to him, "Pray let me live. I am not a real fish; I am an enchanted prince, put me in the water again, and let me go." "Oh!" said the man, "you need not make so many words about the matter; I wish to have nothing to do with a fish that can talk; so swim away as soon as you please." Then he put him back into the water, and the fish darted straight down to the bottom, and left a long streak of blood behind him.

When the fisherman went home to his wife in the ditch, he told her how he had caught a great fish, and how it had told him it was an enchanted prince, and that on hearing it speak he had let it go again. "Did you not ask it for anything?" said the wife. "No," said the man, "what should I ask for?" "Ah!" said the wife, "we live very wretchedly here in this evil-smelling ditch; do go back, and tell the fish we want a little cottage."

The fisherman did not much like the business; however, he went to the sea, and when he came there the water looked all yellow and green. And he stood at the water's edge, and said,

> O man of the sea!
> Come listen to me,
> For Alice my wife,
> The plague of my life,
> Has sent me to beg a boon of thee!'

Then the fish came swimming to him, and said, "Well, what does she want?" "Ah!" answered the fisherman, "my wife says that when I had caught you, I ought to have asked you for something before I let you go again; she does not like living any longer in the ditch, and wants a little cottage." "Go home, then," said the fish, "she is in the cottage already." So the man went home, and saw his wife standing at the door of a cottage. "Come in, come in," said she; "is not this much better than the ditch?" And there was a parlor, and a bedchamber, and a kitchen; and behind the cottage there was a little garden with all sorts of flowers and fruits, and a courtyard full of ducks and chickens. "Ah!" said the fisherman, "how happily we shall live!" "We will try to do so at least," said his wife.

Everything went right for a week or two, and then Dame Alice said, "Husband, there is not room enough

in this cottage, the courtyard and garden are a great deal too small; I should like to have a large stone castle to live in; so go to the fish again, and tell him to give us a castle." "Wife," said the fisherman, "I don't like to go to him again, for perhaps he will be angry; we ought to be content with the cottage." "Nonsense!" said the wife; "he will do it very willingly; go along, and try."

The fisherman went; but his heart was very heavy: and when he came to the sea, it looked blue and gloomy, though it was quite calm, and he went close to it, and said,

'O man of the sea!
Come listen to me,
For Alice my wife,
The plague of my life,
Has sent me to beg a boon of thee!'

"Well, what does she want now?" said the fish. "Ah!" said the man very sorrowfully, "my wife wants to live in a stone castle." "Go home then," said the fish, "she is standing at the door of it already." So away went the fisherman, and found his wife standing before a great castle. "See," said she, "is not this grand?" With that they went into the castle together, and found a great many servants there, and the rooms all richly furnished and full of golden chairs and tables; and behind the castle was a garden, and a wood half a mile long, full of sheep, and goats, and hares, and deer; and in the courtyard were stables and cow houses. "Well," said the man, "now will we live contented and happy in this beautiful castle for the rest of our lives." "Perhaps we may," said the wife; "but let us consider and sleep upon it before we make up our minds": so they went to bed.

The next morning, when Dame Alice awoke, it was

broad daylight, and she jogged the fisherman with her elbow, and said, "Get up, husband, and bestir yourself, for we must be king of all the land." "Wife, wife," said the man, "why should we wish to be king? I will not be king." "Then I will," said Alice. "But, wife," answered the fisherman, "how can you be king? the fish cannot make you a king." "Husband," said she, "say no more about it, but go and try; I will be king!" So the man went away, quite sorrowful to think that his wife should want to be king. The sea looked a dark gray color, and was covered with foam as he cried out,

O man of the sea!
Come listen to me,
For Alice my wife,
The plague of my life,
Has sent me to beg a boon of thee!

"Well, what would she have now?" said the fish. "Alas!" said the man, "my wife wants to be king." "Go home," said the fish; "she is king already."

Then the fisherman went home; and as he came close to the palace, he saw a troop of soldiers, and heard the sound of drums and trumpets; and when he entered in, he saw his wife sitting on a high throne of gold and diamonds, with a golden crown upon her head; and on each side of her stood six beautiful maidens, each a head taller than the other. "Well, wife," said the fisherman, "are you king?" "Yes," said she, "I am king." And when he had looked at her for a long time, he said, "Ah, wife! what a fine thing it is to be king! now we shall never have anything more to wish for." "I don't know how that may be," said she; "never is a long time. I am king, 'tis true, but I begin to be tired of it, and I think I should like to be emperor." "Alas, wife! why should you wish to be emperor?" said the

fisherman. "Husband," said she, "go to the fish; I say I will be emperor." "Ah, wife!" replied the fisherman, "the fish cannot make an emperor, and I should not like to ask for such a thing." "I am king," said Alice, "and you are my slave, so go directly!" So the fisherman was obliged to go; and he muttered as he went along, "This will come to no good, it is too much to ask, the fish will be tired at last, and then we shall repent of what we have done." He soon arrived at the sea, and the water was quite black and muddy, and a mighty whirlwind blew over it; but he went to the shore, and said,

> O man of the sea!
> Come listen to me,
> For Alice my wife,
> The plague of my life,
> Has sent me to beg a boon of thee!'

"What would she have now!" said the fish. "Ah!" said the fisherman, "she wants to be emperor." "Go home," said the fish; "she is emperor already."

So he went home again; and as he came near he saw his wife sitting on a very lofty throne made of solid gold, with a great crown on her head full two yards high, and on each side of her stood her guards and attendants in a row, each one smaller than the other, from the tallest giant down to a little dwarf no bigger than my finger. And before her stood princes, and dukes, and earls; and the fisherman went up to her and said, "Wife, are you emperor?" "Yes," said she, "I am emperor." "Ah!" said the man as he gazed upon her, "what a fine thing it is to be emperor!" "Husband," said she, "why should we stay at being emperor; I will be pope next." "O wife, wife!" said he, "how can you be pope? there is but one pope at a time in Christendom." "Husband," said she, "I will be pope

this very day." "But," replied the husband, "the fish cannot make you pope." "What nonsense!" said she, "if he can make an emperor, he can make a pope, go and try him." So the fisherman went. But when he came to the shore the wind was raging, and the sea was tossed up and down like boiling water, and the ships were in the greatest distress and danced upon the waves most fearfully; in the middle of the sky there was a little blue, but toward the south it was all red as if a dreadful storm was rising. At this the fisherman was terribly frightened, and trembled, so that his knees knocked together; but he went to the shore and said,

O man of the sea!
Come listen to me,
For Alice my wife,
The plague of my life,
Has sent me to beg a boon of thee!

"What does she want now?" said the fish. "Ah!" said the fisherman, "my wife wants to be pope." "Go home," said the fish, "She is pope already."

Then the fisherman went home, and found his wife sitting on a throne that was two miles high; and she had three great crowns on her head, and around stood all the pomp and power of the Church; and on each side were two rows of burning lights, of all sizes, the greatest as large as the highest and biggest tower in the world, and the least no larger than a small rush-light. "Wife," said the fisherman as he looked at all this grandeur, "are you pope?" "Yes," said she, "I am pope." "Well, wife," replied he, "it is a grand thing to be pope; and now you must be content, for you can be nothing greater." "I will consider that," said the wife. Then they went to bed: but Dame Alice could not sleep all night for thinking what she should be next. At last morning came, and the sun rose.

"Ha!" thought she as she looked at it through the window, "cannot I prevent the sun rising?" At this she was very angry, and she wakened her husband, and said, "Husband, go to the fish and tell him I want to be lord of the sun and moon." The fisherman was half asleep, but the thought frightened him so much that he started and fell out of bed. "Alas, wife!" said he, "cannot you be content to be pope?" "No," said she, "I am very uneasy, and cannot bear to see the sun and moon rise without my leave. Go to the fish directly."

Then the man went trembling for fear; and as he was going down to the shore a dreadful storm arose, so that the trees and the rocks shook; and the heavens became black, and the lightning played, and the thunder rolled; and you might have seen in the sea great black waves like mountains with a white crown of foam upon them; and the fisherman said,

> O man of the sea!
> Come listen to me,
> For Alice my wife,
> The plague of my life,
> Has sent me to beg a boon of thee!'

"What does she want now?" said the fish. "Ah!" said he, "she wants to be lord of the sun and moon." "Go home," said the fish, "to your ditch again!" And there they live to this very day.

A folk tale from *Popular Stories* by the Brothers Grimm. Published by the Oxford University Press, New York, and reprinted by permission.

THE GOLDEN TOUCH

By Nathaniel Hawthorne

ONCE upon a time there lived a very rich king whose name was Midas, and he had a little daughter whom he loved very dearly. This king was fonder of gold than of anything else in the whole world: or if he did love anything better, it was the one little daughter who played so merrily beside her father's footstool.

But the more Midas loved his daughter, the more he wished to be rich for her sake. He thought, foolish man, that the best thing he could do for his child was to leave her the biggest pile of yellow, glittering gold that had ever been heaped together since the world began. So he gave all his thoughts and all his time to his purpose.

When he worked in his garden, he used to wish that the roses had leaves made of gold; and once when his little daughter brought him a handful of yellow buttercups, he exclaimed, "Now if these had only been real

gold they would have been worth gathering." He very soon forgot how beautiful the flowers, and the grass, and the trees were, and at the time my story begins Midas could scarcely bear to see or to touch anything that was not made of gold.

Every day he used to spend a great many hours in a dark, ugly room underground: it was here that he kept all his money, and whenever Midas wanted to be very happy he would lock himself into this miserable room and would spend hours and hours pouring the glittering coins out of his moneybags. Or he would count again and again the bars of gold which were kept in a big oak chest with a great iron lock in the lid, and sometimes he would carry a boxful of gold dust from the dark corner where it lay, and would look at the shining heap by the light that came from a tiny window.

To his greedy eyes there never seemed to be half enough; he was quite discontented. "What a happy man I should be," he said one day, "if only the whole world could be made of gold, and if it all belonged to me!"

Just then a shadow fell across the golden pile, and when Midas looked up he saw a young man with a cheery rosy face standing in the thin strip of sunshine that came through the little window. Midas was certain that he had carefully locked the door before he opened his moneybags, so he knew that no one, unless he were more than a mortal, could get in beside him. The stranger seemed so friendly and pleasant that Midas was not in the least afraid.

"You are a rich man, friend Midas," the visitor said; "I doubt if any other room in the whole world has as much gold in it as this."

"Maybe," said Midas in a discontented voice, "but I wish it were much more: and think how many years

it has taken me to gather it all! If I only could live for a thousand years, then I might be really rich."

"Then you are not satisfied?" asked the stranger. Midas shook his head.

"What would satisfy you?" the stranger said.

Midas looked at his visitor for a minute, and then said, "I am tired of getting money with so much trouble. I should like everything I touch to be changed into gold."

The stranger smiled, and his smile seemed to fill the room like a flood of sunshine. "Are you quite sure, Midas, that you would never be sorry if your wish were granted?" he asked.

"Quite sure," said Midas: "I ask nothing more to make me perfectly happy."

"Be it as you wish, then," said the stranger: "from to-morrow at sunrise you will have your desire—everything you touch will be changed into gold."

The figure of the stranger then grew brighter and brighter, so that Midas had to close his eyes, and when he opened them again he saw only a yellow sunbeam in the room, and all around him glittered the precious gold which he had spent his life in gathering.

How Midas longed for the next day to come! He scarcely slept that night, and as soon as it was light he laid his hand on the chair beside his bed; then he nearly cried when he saw that nothing happened: the chair remained just as it was. "Could the stranger have made a mistake," he wondered, "or had it been a dream?"

He lay still getting angrier and angrier each minute until at last the sun rose, and the first rays shone through his window and brightened the room. It seemed to Midas that the bright yellow sunbeam was reflected very curiously from the covering of his bed, and he sat up and looked more closely.

What was his delight when he saw that the bedcover on which his hands rested had become a woven cloth of the purest and brightest gold! He started up and caught hold of the bedpost: instantly it became a golden pillar. He pulled aside the window curtain and the tassel grew heavy in his hand: it was a mass of gold! He took up a book from the table, and at his first touch it became a bundle of thin golden leaves on which no reading could be seen.

Midas was delighted with his good fortune; he took his spectacles from his pocket and put them on, so that he might see more distinctly what he was about. But to his surprise he could not possibly see through them: the clear glasses had turned into gold, and of course, though they were worth a great deal of money, they were of no more use as spectacles.

Midas thought this was rather troublesome, but he soon forgot all about it. He went downstairs, and how he laughed with pleasure when he noticed that the railing became a bar of shining gold as he rested his hand on it: even the rusty iron latch of the garden door turned yellow as soon as his fingers pressed it.

How lovely the garden was! In the old days Midas had been very fond of flowers, and had spent a great deal of money in getting rare trees and flowers with which to make his garden beautiful.

Red roses in full bloom scented the air, purple and white violets nestled under the rosebushes, and birds were singing happily in the cherry trees, which were covered with snow-white blossoms. But since Midas had become so fond of gold he had lost all pleasure in his garden: this morning he did not even see how beautiful it was.

He was thinking of nothing but the wonderful gift the stranger had brought him, and he was sure he could

make the garden of far more value than it had ever been. So he went from bush to bush and touched the flowers. And the beautiful pink and red color faded from the roses, the violets became stiff, and then glittered among bunches of hard yellow leaves, and showers of snow-white blossoms no longer fell from the cherry trees: the tiny petals were all changed into

flakes of solid gold, which glittered so brightly in the sunbeams that Midas could not bear to look at them.

But he was quite satisfied with his morning's work, and went back to the palace for breakfast feeling very happy.

Just then he heard his little daughter crying bitterly, and she came running into the room sobbing as if her

heart would break. "How now, little lady," he said, "pray what is the matter with you this morning?"

"Oh dear, oh dear, such a dreadful thing has happened!" answered the child. "I went to the garden to gather you some roses, and they are spoiled: they have grown quite ugly, and stiff, and yellow, and they have no scent. What can be the matter?" and she cried bitterly.

Midas was ashamed to confess that he was to blame, so he said nothing, and they sat down at the table. The King was very hungry, and he poured out a cup of coffee and helped himself to some fish; but the instant his lips touched the coffee it became the color of gold, and the next moment it hardened into a solid lump. "Oh dear me!" exclaimed the King, rather surprised.

"What is the matter, father?" asked his little daughter.

"Nothing, child, nothing," he answered; "eat your bread and milk before it gets cold."

Then he looked at the nice little fish on his plate, and he gently touched its tail with his finger. To his horror it was at once changed into gold. He took one of the delicious hot cakes, and he had scarcely broken it when the white flour changed into yellow crumbs which shone like grains of hard sea sand.

"I do not see how I am going to get any breakfast," he said to himself, and he looked with envy at his little daughter, who had dried her tears and was eating her bread and milk hungrily. "I wonder if it will be the same at dinner," he thought, "and if so, how am I going to live if all my food is to be turned into gold?"

Midas began to get very anxious and to think about many things that he had never thought of before. Here was the very richest breakfast that could be set before a King, and yet there was nothing that he could

eat! The poorest workman sitting down to a crust of bread and a cup of water was better off than King Midas, whose dainty food was worth its weight in gold.

He began to doubt whether, after all, riches were the only good thing in the world, and he was so hungry that he gave a groan.

His little daughter noticed that her father ate nothing, and at first she sat still, looking at him and trying to find out what was the matter. Then she got down from her chair, and running to her father, she threw her arms lovingly round his knees.

Midas bent down and kissed her: he felt that his little daughter's love was a thousand times more precious than all the gold he had gained since the stranger came to visit him. "My precious, precious little girl!" he said, but there was no answer.

Alas! what had he done? The moment that his lips had touched his child's forehead, a change took place. Her sweet, rosy face, so full of love and happiness, hardened and became a glittering yellow color; her beautiful brown curls hung like wires of gold from the small head, and her soft, tender little figure grew stiff in his arms.

Midas had often said to people that his little daughter was worth her weight in gold, and it had become really true; now when it was too late, he felt how much more precious was the warm tender heart that loved him than all the gold that could be piled up between the earth and sky.

He began to wring his hands and to wish that he was the poorest man in the wide world, if the loss of all his money might bring back the rosy color to his dear child's face.

While he was in despair he suddenly saw a stranger

standing near the door, the same visitor he had seen yesterday for the first time in his treasure room, and who had granted his wish.

"Well, friend Midas," he said, "pray how are you enjoying your new power?"

Midas shook his head. "I am very miserable," he said.

"Very miserable, are you?" exclaimed the stranger. "And how does that happen: have I not faithfully kept my promise; have you not everything that your heart desired?"

"Gold is not everything," answered Midas, "and I have lost all that my heart really cared for."

"Ah!" said the stranger, "I see you have made some discoveries since yesterday. Tell me truly, which of these things do you really think is most worth—a cup of clear cold water and a crust of bread, or the power of turning everything you touch into gold; your own little daughter, alive and loving, or that solid statue of a child which would be valued at thousands of pounds?"

"O my child, my child!" sobbed Midas, wringing his hands. "I would not have given one of her curls for the power of changing all the world into gold, and I would give all I possess for a cup of cold water and a crust of bread."

"You are wiser than you were, King Midas," said the stranger. "Tell me, do you really wish to get rid of your fatal gift?"

"Yes," said Midas, "it is hateful to me."

"Go, then," said the stranger, "and plunge into the river that flows at the bottom of the garden; take also a pitcher of the same water, and sprinkle it over anything that you wish to change back again from gold to its former substance."

King Midas bowed low, and when he lifted his head the stranger was nowhere to be seen.

You will easily believe that King Midas lost no time in getting a big pitcher, then he ran toward the river. On reaching the water he jumped in without even waiting to take off his shoes. "How delightful!" he said, as he came out with his hair all dripping: "this is really a most refreshing bath, and surely it must have washed away the magic gift."

Then he dipped the pitcher into the water, and how glad he was to see that it became just a common earthen pitcher and not a golden one as it had been five minutes before! He was conscious, also, of a change in himself: a cold, heavy weight seemed to have gone, and he felt light, and happy, and human once more. Maybe his heart had been changing into gold too, though he could not see it, and now it had softened again and become gentle and kind.

Midas hurried back to the palace with the pitcher of water, and the first thing he did was to sprinkle it by handfuls all over the golden figure of his little daughter. You would have laughed to see how the rosy color came back to her cheeks, and how she began to sneeze and choke, and how surprised she was to find herself dripping wet and her father still throwing water over her.

You see, she did not know that she had been a little golden statue, for she could not remember anything from the moment when she ran to kiss her father.

King Midas then led his daughter into the garden, where he sprinkled all the rest of the water over the rosebushes, and the grass, and the trees; and in a minute they were blooming as freshly as ever, and the air was laden with the scent of the flowers.

There were two things left, which, as long as he

lived, used to remind King Midas of the stranger's fatal gift. One was the sands at the bottom of the river which always sparkled like grains of gold, and the other his little daughter's curls which were no longer brown. They had a golden tinge which had not been there before that miserable day when he had received the fatal gift, and when his kiss had changed them into gold.

An adaptation of Hawthorne's tale of the same title; from *A Staircase of Stories,* a varied and useful collection of sixty-four stories chosen by Louey Chisholm and Amy Steedman. "The Golden Touch" is reprinted here by arrangement with the publishers, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York.

LITTLE SNOW-WHITE

By the Brothers Grimm

IT was the middle of winter, and the snowflakes were falling like feathers from the sky. A queen sat sewing at a window framed in black, and as she sewed and gazed out of the window she stuck her finger with a needle, and three drops of blood fell upon the snow. Because the red upon the white snow looked pretty, she thought to herself: "Would that I had a child as white as snow, as red as blood, and as black as the ebony of this window frame."

Soon after that she had a little daughter who was as white as snow, with cheeks as red as blood, and with hair as black as ebony, and the child was therefore called little Snow-White.

When the child was born, the queen died. After a year had gone by, the king took another queen, a beautiful woman, but proud and haughty, and she could not bear that anyone should be more beautiful than she.

The queen had a wonderful mirror, and when she stood in front of it and said,

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is the fairest of us all?"

The mirror answered,

"Thou art fairest now of all."

Then she was content; for she knew that the mirror spoke the truth.

As little Snow-White grew older, she grew more beautiful, until she was fair as the day, and more beautiful than the queen herself. When the queen now asked her mirror,

"Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is the fairest of us all?"

it replied,

"O Queen, thy beauty is indeed most rare,
But Snow-White is a thousand times more fair."

This answer startled the woman, and she became yellow and green with envy. From that hour on, whenever she saw Snow-White, her heart hardened against her, and she hated the maiden. Envy and pride, like a disease, grew ever stronger in her heart, so that she had no rest by day or night. Finally, she called a hunstman to her, and said, "Take the child out into the forest and kill her, so that I may never see her again."

The huntsman took Snow-White away, but when he drew out his knife to kill her, she began to cry, and said: "Oh, dear huntsman, spare my life, and I will run into the wildwood and never come home again!"

She was so beautiful that the huntsman felt sorry for her, and said, "Well, run away then, poor child!"

Now the poor child was left alone in the great forest.

THEN SHE SAW A LITTLE HOUSE

She was so frightened at the sight of so many trees that she did not know which way to turn. Then she began to run, and ran over the sharp stones and through the thorns, and the wild beasts sprang by her, but did not harm her. She ran until her feet could no longer carry her; until it was getting dark; then she saw a little house, and went in to rest.

In the hut everything was very small, but neater and cleaner than can be told. There stood a little white-covered table with seven little plates, each little plate with its little spoon; besides these there were seven little knives and forks, and seven little mugs. Against the wall were seven little beds in a row, each covered with a snowy coverlet.

Snow-White, because she was very hungry and thirsty, ate a bit of porridge and bread from each little plate, and drank a drop of wine from each little mug; for she did not wish to take away from anyone the whole share. After that, because she was so tired, she lay down on one of the little beds; but it did not suit her. One was too long, another too short. At last, the seventh was just right. So there she lay, said her prayers, and went to sleep.

When it had grown quite dark, the masters of the hut came home. They were seven little dwarfs who dug and delved for gold in the mountains. They lighted their seven little candles, and as it was now light in the little house, they saw that some one had been there, since things were not just as they had left them.

The first said, "Who has been sitting on my little stool?"

The second said, "Who has been eating from my little plate?"

The third, "Who has taken my bit of bread?"

The fourth, "Who has been tasting my porridge?"

The fifth, "Who has been using my little fork?"

The sixth, "Who has been cutting with my little knife?"

The seventh, "Who has been drinking from my little mug?"

Then the first dwarf, looking round, saw that there was a little hollow in his bed, and cried, "Who has been lying on my bed?"

The others came running and cried, "Some one has been lying on our beds, too."

The seventh, when he looked at his bed, saw Snow-White lying there asleep. So he called the others, who came running and shouting with wonder and holding up their seven little candles to light up Snow-White. "Oh my goodness, my goodness!" they cried. "What a beautiful child is this!"

They were so full of joy that they did not waken her, but let her sleep in the little bed; and the seventh dwarf slept with each of his companions one hour, and so passed the night.

When it was morning, Snow-White awoke, and when she saw the seven dwarfs, she was frightened; but they were friends, and asked, "What is your name?"

"I am called little Snow-White," answered she.

"Why did you come to our house?" asked the dwarfs.

She told them that the queen would have had her killed, but the huntsman had spared her life, and she had been wandering about the whole day, until at last she had found their house.

Then the seven dwarfs asked, "Will you look after our house, and cook for us, make the beds, wash, sew, and knit for us, and keep everything tidy and clean? If so, you may stay with us, and you shall want for nothing."

"Yes," said Snow-White, "with all my heart."

And so she stayed with them and kept the house in order. In the morning the dwarfs went to the mountains and searched for gold; in the evening they came home and found their supper ready for them. During the day, the maiden was alone, so the good dwarfs warned her: "Beware of the queen; she will soon know that you are here. Let no one in."

But the queen, thinking that she was again the most beautiful in the land, stepped before her mirror and said,

> Mirror, mirror on the wall,
> Who is the fairest of us all?

Then the mirror answered,

> O Queen, thy beauty was of all most rare;
> But over the hills so far away
> Doth Snow-White over the dwarfs hold sway,
> And she is a thousand times more fair.

Then she was very angry, for she knew that the mirror always spoke the truth; she understood that the huntsman had deceived her, and that Snow-White was still alive. Now she thought and thought of how she might get rid of Snow-White, for so long as she was not the fairest in the land, she had no rest.

At last she thought of a scheme. By magic, she made a poisoned comb. Then she dressed herself as an old peddler-woman, so that no one would know her. In that disguise, she went over the seven hills to the house of the seven dwarfs, knocked at the door and called out, "Fine goods for sale! Fine goods for sale!"

Snow-White peeped out of the window, and said, "Good-day, my good woman. What have you to sell?"

"Fine goods, beautiful goods," answered the old woman, and drawing out the poisoned comb, she held it up for Snow-White to see.

"I may let this honest woman in," thought Snow-White, and she unbolted the door.

As soon as Snow-White had bought the comb, the old woman said, "Now I will comb you properly, for once."

Poor little Snow-White, thinking that nothing was wrong, let the old woman comb her hair; but scarcely had the woman put the comb into her hair, when the poison began to work, and the maiden fell senseless.

"That is the end of you—you model of beauty!" cried the wicked woman, as she went away.

Luckily, evening soon came, and the seven dwarfs returned home. When they saw Snow-White lying as if dead upon the ground, they thought at once of the queen, and looking about, they found the poisoned comb. No sooner had they drawn it out of her hair than Snow-White revived, and told them what had happened to her. Then they warned her again to stay in the hut, and to open the door to no one.

Now, when the queen reached home, she placed herself before the mirror, and said,

> Mirror, mirror on the wall,
> Who is the fairest of us all?

Then the mirror answered her:

> O Queen, thy beauty was of all most rare;
> But over the hills so far away
> Doth Snow-White over the dwarfs hold sway,
> And she is a thousand times more fair.

When the woman heard the mirror speak thus, she shook with rage. "Snow-White shall die if it costs me my own life!" she cried.

Then she went into a secret inner chamber, where no one entered, and made a poison apple. Without, it looked beautiful enough—pale green with red cheeks,

so that whoever saw it would long for it; but whoever ate the smallest bit of it must die. When the apple was ready, she painted her face and dressed herself as a peasant woman. Then she went over the seven hills to the home of the seven dwarfs. She knocked at the door, and Snow-White put her head out of the window, and said, "I cannot let anyone in; the dwarfs told me not to."

"That is all right," said the woman, "I can soon sell my apples. There—I will give you one as a present."

"No," said Snow-White, "I dare not take anything."

"Are you afraid of poison?" asked the old woman. "I'll cut the apple in two pieces. The red side you may eat; I will eat the green."

Now the apple was so cunningly made that the red cheek alone was poisoned. Snow-White longed for the beautiful apple, and when she saw that the peasant woman was eating some of it, she could no longer resist, but stretched out her hand and took the poisoned half; but no sooner had she put a bit in her mouth than she fell down as if dead.

Then the woman, looking at her with glittering eyes and laughing very loud, said: "White as snow, red as blood, black as ebony! This time the dwarfs cannot bring you to life again!"

When she reached home and asked her glass,

Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Who is the fairest of us all?

At last the mirror answered,

Thou art fairest now of all.

Then her envious heart was at rest—as much so as an envious heart can be.

The dwarfs, when they came home in the evening, found Snow-White lying on the ground. She was dead.

They lifted her up, looked to see if they could find any poison, unlaced her, combed her hair, and bathed her face; but it was of no use. The dear child was dead, and dead she remained.

The dwarfs laid her on a couch, and all seven sat about and wept and wept for three days. Then they wished to bury her, but so lifelike did she look, with her beautiful red cheeks, that they could not do it. So they had a case of clear glass made, in which one could see Snow-White from all sides. They laid her in it and wrote her name, and that she was a king's daughter, in golden letters upon the glass. Then they placed the case out upon a hill, and one of the dwarfs always remained near to watch. Even the birds came and mourned for Snow-White: first an owl, then a raven, and last of all came a dove.

Now Snow-White lay for a long time in the case and looked as if she were asleep; for she was still as white as snow, as red as blood, and her hair was as black as ebony.

It happened, one day, that a king's son came to the dwarfs' house to pass the night. He saw the glass case up on the mountain with the beautiful Snow-White in it, and read what was written upon it in letters of gold. Then he said to the dwarfs, "Let me have the case; I will give you whatever you ask for it."

But the dwarfs answered, "We will not give her to you for all the gold in the world."

"Then give her to me as a gift," he said, "for I cannot live without seeing Snow-White. I will cherish and protect her as my dearest treasure."

When he spoke thus, the good dwarfs took pity upon him, and gave him the case. The king's son now ordered one of his attendants to carry it away on his shoulders. Then it happened that they stumbled over

a rut, and the shock caused the bit of poisoned apple to fall out of Snow-White's throat. And, after that, it was not long before she sat up, alive.

"Oh dear! Where am I?" she cried.

The king's son, full of joy, answered, "You are safe with me."

Then he told her what had happened to her, and said, "I would rather have you than anything else in the world. Come with me to my father's castle. You shall be my bride."

Snow-White was kind and went with him and the seven little dwarfs accompanied them. Then the wedding was celebrated with great splendor and magnificence.

Now the queen was also invited to the feast. And when she had dressed herself in her most beautiful clothes, she stepped up to her mirror, and said,

> Mirror, mirror on the wall,
> Who is the fairest of us all?

The mirror answered,

> O Queen, thou art indeed of beauty rare,
> But the young queen is a thousand times more fair.

Then the woman was in a great fury, and so distressed that she did not know what to do. At first she thought she would not go to the wedding; but then she could not rest until she went to see the young queen. As soon as she entered the palace, and saw that the young bride was Snow-White, she was seized with such a fit of rage that she fell lifeless to the floor.

One of fifty-four stories in an admirable collection, *The Atlantic Treasury of Childhood Stories.* This large illustrated volume is edited by Mary D. H. Hodgkins. The version of "Little Snow-White" is copyright by Little, Brown and Company, Boston, and is reprinted by permission.

THE MIRACULOUS PITCHER

By Nathaniel Hawthorne

ONE evening, in times long ago, old Philemon and his old wife Baucis sat at their cottage door, enjoying the calm and beautiful sunset. They had already eaten their frugal supper, and intended now to spend a quiet hour or two before bedtime. So they talked together about their garden, and their cow and their bees, and their grapevine, which clambered over the cottage wall and on which the grapes were beginning to turn purple. But the rude shouts of children and the fierce barking of dogs, in the village near at hand, grew louder and louder, until at last it was hardly possible for Baucis and Philemon to hear each other speak.

"Ah, wife," cried Philemon, "I fear some poor traveler is seeking hospitality among our neighbors yonder, and instead of giving him food and lodg-

ing, they have set their dogs at him, as their custom is!"

"Well-a-day!" answered old Baucis, "I do wish our neighbors felt a little more kindness for their fellow creatures. And only think of bringing up their children in this naughty way, and patting them on the head when they fling stones at strangers!"

These old folks, you must know, were quite poor, and had to work pretty hard for a living. Old Philemon toiled diligently in his garden, while Baucis was always busy with her distaff, or making a little butter and cheese with their cow's milk, or doing one thing and another about the cottage. Their food was seldom anything but bread, milk, and vegetables, with sometimes a portion of honey from their beehive, and now and then a bunch of grapes that had ripened against the cottage wall. But they were two of the kindest old people in the world, and would cheerfully have gone without their dinners, any day, rather than refuse a slice of their brown loaf, a cup of nice milk, and a spoonful of honey, to a weary traveler who might pause before their door.

Their cottage stood on a rising ground, at some short distance from the village, which lay in a hollow valley about half a mile in breadth. This valley, in past ages, when the world was new, had probably been the bed of a lake. But it had been dry land so long that oaks had sprung up, and grown great and high, and perished with old age, and been succeeded by others as tall and stately as the first. Never was there a prettier or more fruitful valley. The very sight of the plenty around them should have made the people kind and gentle and ready to show their gratitude to Providence by doing good to their fellow creatures. But they were very selfish and hard-hearted people, and

had no pity for the poor, nor sympathy with the homeless.

So you can understand why old Philemon spoke so sorrowfully when he heard the shouts of the children and the barking of the dogs at the farther end of the village street. There was a din, which lasted a good while, and seemed to pass quite through the breadth of the valley.

"I never heard the dogs so loud!" said the good old man.

"Nor the children so rude!" answered his good old wife.

They sat shaking their heads, one to another, while the noise came nearer and nearer; until, at the foot of the hill on which their cottage stood, they saw two travelers approaching on foot. Close behind them came the fierce dogs, snarling at their very heels. A little farther off ran a crowd of children, who sent up shrill cries, and flung stones at the two strangers with all their might. Once or twice the younger of the two men—he was a slender and very active figure—turned about and drove back the dogs with a staff which he carried in his hand. His companion, who was a very tall person, walked calmly along, as if disdaining to notice the naughty children or the pack of curs whose manners the children seemed to imitate.

Both of the travelers were very humbly clad, and looked as if they might not have money enough in their pockets to pay for a night's lodging. And this, I am afraid, was the reason why the villagers had allowed their children and dogs to treat them so rudely.

"Come, wife," said Philemon to Baucis, "let us go and meet these poor people. No doubt they feel almost too heavy-hearted to climb the hill."

"Go you and meet them," answered Baucis, "while

I make haste within doors and see whether we can get them anything for supper. A comfortable bowl of bread and milk would do wonders toward raising their spirits."

Accordingly, she hastened into the cottage. Philemon, on his part, went forward and extended his hand with so hospitable a look that there was no need of

saying what nevertheless he did say in the heartiest tone imaginable:

"Welcome, strangers! Welcome!"

"Thank you!" replied the younger of the two, in a lively kind of way, notwithstanding his weariness and trouble. "This is quite another greeting than we have met with yonder, in the village."

Philemon was glad to see him in such good spirits; nor, indeed, would you have fancied, by the traveler's

look and manner, that he was weary with a long day's journey, besides being disheartened by rough treatment at the end of it. He was dressed in rather an odd way, with a sort of cap on his head, the brim of which stuck out over both ears. Though it was a summer evening, he wore a cloak, which he kept wrapped closely about him, perhaps because his under garments were shabby. Philemon noticed, too, that he had on a singular pair of shoes; but as it was now growing dusk, and as the old man's eyesight was none of the sharpest, he could not tell precisely in what the strangeness consisted. One thing certainly seemed queer. The traveler was so wonderfully light and active that it appeared as if his feet sometimes rose from the ground of their own accord, or could only be kept down by an effort.

"I used to be lightfooted, in my youth," said Philemon to the traveler. "But I always found my feet grow heavier toward nightfall."

"There is nothing like a good staff to help one along," answered the stranger; "and I happen to have an excellent one, as you see."

This staff, in fact, was the oddest-looking staff that Philemon had ever beheld. It was made of olivewood, and had something like a pair of wings at the top.

"Friends," said the old man, "sit down and rest yourselves here on this bench. My good wife Baucis has gone to see what you can have for supper."

"Was there not," asked the elder stranger, in a remarkably deep tone of voice, "a lake in very ancient times, covering the spot where now stands yonder village?"

"Not in my day, friend," answered Philemon; "and yet I am an old man, as you see. There were always the fields and meadows just as they are now, and the

old trees, and the little stream murmuring through the midst of the valley. Not my father, nor his father before him, ever saw it otherwise, so far as I know; and doubtless it will still be the same when old Philemon shall be gone and forgotten!"

"That is more than can be safely foretold," said the stranger; and there was something very stern in his deep voice. He shook his head, too, so that his dark and heavy curls were shaken with the movement.

While Baucis was getting supper, the travelers both began to talk very sociably with Philemon.

"Pray, my young friend," said Philemon to the younger stranger, as they grew familiar together, "what may I call your name?"

"Why, I am very nimble, as you see," answered the traveler. "So, if you call me Quicksilver, the name will fit tolerably well."

"Quicksilver? Quicksilver?" repeated Philemon, looking in the traveler's face, to see if he were making fun of him. "It is a very odd name! And your companion there? Has he as strange a one?"

"You must ask the thunder to tell it you!" replied Quicksilver, putting on a mysterious look. "No other voice is loud enough."

Baucis had now got supper ready, and coming to the door, began to make apologies for the poor fare which she was forced to set before her guests.

"All will be very well; do not trouble yourself, my good dame," replied the elder stranger kindly. "An honest hearty welcome to a guest works miracles with the fare, and is capable of turning the coarsest food to nectar and ambrosia."

As Baucis had said, there was but a scanty supper for two hungry travelers. In the middle of the table was the remnant of a brown loaf, with a piece of

cheese on one side of it, and a dish of honeycomb on the other. There was a pretty bunch of grapes for each of the guests. A moderate-sized earthen pitcher, nearly full of milk, stood at a corner of the board; and when Baucis had filled two bowls and set them before the strangers, only a little milk remained in the bottom of the pitcher. The travelers both drank off all the milk in their bowls, at a draught.

"A little more milk, kind Mother Baucis, if you please," said Quicksilver. "The day has been hot, and I am very much athirst."

"Now my dear people," answered Baucis, in great confusion, "I am so sorry and ashamed! But the truth is, there is hardly a drop more milk in the pitcher."

"Why, it appears to me," cried Quicksilver, starting up from the table and taking the pitcher by the handle, "it really appears to me that matters are not quite so bad as you think. Here is certainly more milk in the pitcher."

So saying, and to the great astonishment of Baucis, he filled not only his own bowl but his companion's likewise, from the pitcher that was supposed to be almost empty. The good woman could scarcely believe her eyes. She had certainly poured out nearly all the milk, and had peeped in afterward and seen the bottom of the pitcher as she set it down upon the table.

"But I am old," thought Baucis to herself, "and apt to be forgetful. I suppose I must have made a mistake."

"What excellent milk!" observed Quicksilver, after quaffing the contents of the second bowl. "Excuse me, my kind hostess, but I must really ask you for a little more."

Now Baucis had seen, as plainly as she could see anything, that Quicksilver had turned the pitcher upside down and so had poured out every drop of milk, in

filling the last bowl. However, in order to let him know just how the case was, she lifted the pitcher and made a gesture as if pouring milk into Quicksilver's bowl, but without the least idea that any milk would stream forth. What was her surprise, therefore, when such an abundant cascade fell bubbling into the bowl, that it was immediately filled to the brim and overflowed upon the table.

"And now a slice of your brown loaf, Mother Baucis," said Quicksilver, "and a little of that honey!"

Baucis cut him a slice, and though the loaf, when she and her husband ate of it, had been rather too dry and crusty to be good, it was now as light and moist as if but a few hours out of the oven.

But, oh, the honey! I may just as well let it alone, without trying to describe how exquisitely it smelled and looked. Its color was that of the purest and most transparent gold; and it had the odor of a thousand flowers.

Although good Mother Baucis was a simple old dame, she could not but think that there was something rather out of the common way in all that had been going on. So, after helping the guests to bread and honey and laying a bunch of grapes by each of their plates, she sat down by Philemon and told him what she had seen—in a whisper.

"Did you ever hear the like?" asked she.

"No, I never did," answered Philemon, with a smile. "And I rather think, my dear old wife, you have been walking about in a sort of dream. If I had poured out the milk, I should probably have seen through the business at once. There happened to be a little more in the pitcher than you thought—that is all."

"Ah, husband," said Baucis, "say what you will, these are very uncommon people."

"Well, well," replied Philemon, still smiling, "perhaps they are. They certainly do look as if they had seen better days. I am heartily glad to see them making so comfortable a supper."

Presently Quicksilver asked for another cup of milk. This time old Philemon bestirred himself and took up the pitcher; for he was curious to discover whether there was any reality in the marvels which Baucis had whispered to him. On taking up the pitcher, therefore, he slyly peeped into it, and was fully satisfied that it contained not so much as a single drop. All at once, however, he beheld a little white fountain, which gushed up from the bottom of the pitcher, and speedily filled it to the brim with foaming and deliciously fragrant milk. It was lucky that Philemon, in his surprise, did not drop the miraculous pitcher from his hand.

"Who are ye, wonder-working strangers?" cried he, even more bewildered than his wife had been.

"Your guests, my good Philemon, and your friends," replied the elder traveler, in his mild, deep voice that had something at once sweet and awe-inspiring in it.

The supper being now over, the strangers requested to be shown to their place of repose.

The old man and his wife were stirring betimes in the morning, and the strangers likewise arose with the sun and made their preparations to depart. They persisted in setting out immediately, but asked Philemon and Baucis to walk forth with them a short distance, and show them the road which they were to take.

So they all four issued from the cottage, chatting together like old friends.

"Ah, me! Well-a-day!" exclaimed Philemon, when they had walked a little from their door. "If our

neighbors only knew what a blessed thing it is to show hospitality to strangers, they would tie up their dogs, and never allow their children to fling another stone."

"It is a sin and a shame for them to behave so—that it is!" cried good old Baucis. "And I mean to go this very day and tell some of them what naughty people they are!"

"I fear," remarked Quicksilver, slyly smiling, "that you will find none of them at home."

The elder traveler's brow, just then, assumed such a grave, stern, and awful grandeur, yet serene withal, that neither Baucis nor Philemon dared to speak a word.

"And, by and by, my dear old people," cried Quicksilver, with the liveliest look of fun and mischief in his eyes, "where is this same village that you talk about? On which side of us does it lie? Methinks I do not see it hereabouts."

Philemon and his wife turned toward the valley, where at sunset, only the day before, they had seen the meadows, the houses, the gardens, the clumps of trees, the wide, green-margined street with children playing in it, and all the tokens of business, enjoyment and prosperity. But what was their astonishment! There was no longer any appearance of a village! In its stead, they beheld the broad, blue surface of a lake.

"Alas!" cried these kind-hearted old people, "what has become of our poor neighbors!"

"They exist no longer as men and women," said the elder traveler, in his grand and deep voice, while a roll of thunder seemed to echo at a distance. "There was neither use nor beauty in such a life as theirs; but as for you, good Philemon," he continued, "and you, kind Baucis—you, with your scanty means, have mingled

so much heartfelt hospitality with your entertainment of the homeless stranger, that the milk became an inexhaustible fount of nectar, and the brown loaf and the honey were ambrosia. Thus the gods have feasted at your board off the same food that supplies their banquets on Olympus. You have done well, my dear old friends. Wherefore request whatever favor you have most at heart, and it is granted."

Philemon and Baucis looked at one another, and then —I know not which of the two it was who spoke, but that one uttered the desire of both their hearts.

"Let us live together while we live, and leave the world at the same instant when we die! For we have always loved one another!"

"Be it so!" replied the stranger, with majestic kindness. "Now, look toward your cottage!"

They did so. But what was their surprise on beholding a tall building of white marble, with a wide-open portal, occupying the spot where their humble cottage had so lately stood!

"There is your home," said the stranger, smiling on them both.

The old folks fell on their knees to thank him; but, behold!—neither he nor Quicksilver was there.

So Philemon and Baucis lived in the marble palace, and spent their time, with great satisfaction to themselves, in making everybody jolly and comfortable who happened to pass that way. The milk pitcher, I must not forget to say, retained its marvelous quality of being never empty when it was desirable to have it full. Whenever an honest, good-humored, and free-hearted guest took a draught from this pitcher, he invariably found it the sweetest and most invigorating fluid that ever ran down his throat. But if a cross and disagreeable curmudgeon happened to sip, he was

pretty certain to twist his visage into a hard knot, and pronounce it a pitcher of sour milk!

Thus the old couple lived in their palace a great, great while, and grew older, and older, and very old indeed. At length, however, there came a summer morning when Philemon and Baucis failed to make their appearance, but there in front of the portal stood two venerable trees, which nobody could remember to have seen there the day before. One was an oak, and the other a linden tree. Their boughs—it was strange and beautiful to see—were intertwined.

A breeze sprung up, and set their intermingled boughs astir. And then there was a deep, broad murmur in the air, as if the two mysterious trees were speaking.

"I am old Philemon!" murmured the oak.

"I am old Baucis!" murmured the linden tree.

And oh, what a hospitable shade did they fling around them! Whenever a wayfarer paused beneath it, he heard a pleasant whisper of the leaves above his head, and wondered how the sound should so much resemble words like these:

"Welcome, welcome, dear traveler, welcome!"

And some kind soul, that knew what would have pleased old Baucis and old Philemon best, built a circular seat around both their trunks, where for a great while afterward, the weary, and the hungry, and the thirsty used to repose themselves, and quaff milk abundantly out of the miraculous pitcher.

And I wish, for all our sakes, that we had the pitcher here now!

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THE NIGHTINGALE

By Hans Christian Andersen

IN China, you must know, the emperor is Chinese, and all whom he has about him are Chinese too. It happened a great many years ago, but that's just why it's worth while to hear the story before it is forgotten. The emperor's palace was the most splendid in the world; it was made entirely of porcelain, very costly, but so delicate and brittle that one had to take care how one touched it. In the garden were to be seen the most wonderful flowers, and to the costliest of them silver bells were tied, which sounded, so that nobody should pass by without noticing the flowers. Yes, everything in the emperor's garden was admirably arranged. And it extended so far that the gardener himself did not know where the end was. If a man went on and on, he came into a glorious forest with high trees and deep lakes. The wood extended straight down to the sea, which was blue and deep;

great ships could sail too beneath the branches of the trees; and in the trees lived a nightingale, which sang so splendidly that even the poor fisherman, who had many other things to do, stopped still and listened when he had gone out at night to throw out his nets and heard the nightingale.

"How beautiful that is!" he said; but he was obliged to attend to his property, and thus forgot the bird. But when the next night the bird sang again, and the fisherman heard it, he exclaimed again, "How beautiful that is!"

From all the countries of the world travelers came to the city of the emperor, and admired it, and the palace and the garden, but when they heard the nightingale, they said, "That is the best of all!"

And the travelers told of it when they came home; and the learned men wrote many books about the town, the palace, and the garden. But they did not forget the nightingale; that was placed highest of all; and those who were poets wrote most magnificent poems about the nightingale in the wood by the deep lake.

The books went through all the world, and a few of them once came to the emperor. He sat in his golden chair, and read, and read: every moment he nodded his head, for it pleased him to peruse the masterly descriptions of the city, the palace, and the garden. "But the nightingale is the best of all," it stood written there.

"What's that?" exclaimed the emperor. "I don't know the nightingale at all! Is there such a bird in my empire, and even in my garden? I've never heard of that. To think that I should have to learn such a thing for the first time from books!"

And hereupon he called his cavalier. This cavalier was so grand that if anyone lower in rank than himself

dared to speak to him, or to ask him any question, he answered nothing but "Pf!"—and that meant nothing.

"There is said to be a wonderful bird here called a nightingale," said the emperor. "They say it is the best thing in all my great empire. Why have I never heard anything about it?"

"I have never heard him named," replied the cavalier. "He has never been introduced at court."

"I command that he shall appear this evening, and sing before me," said the emperor. "All the world knows what I possess, although I do not know it myself!"

"I have never heard him mentioned," said the cavalier. "I will seek for him. I will find him."

But where was he to be found? The cavalier ran up and down all the staircases, through halls and passages, but no one among all those whom he met had heard talk of the nightingale. And the cavalier ran back to the emperor, and said that it must be a fable invented by the writers of books.

"Your Imperial Majesty cannot believe how much is written that is fiction, besides something that they call the black art."

"But the book in which I read this," said the emperor, "was sent to me by the high and mighty emperor of Japan, and therefore it cannot be a falsehood. I *will* hear the nightingale! It must be here this evening! It has my imperial favor, and if it does not come, all the court shall be trampled upon after the court has supped!"

"Tsing-pe!" said the cavalier; and again he ran up and down all the staircases, and through all the halls and corridors; and half the court ran with him, for the courtiers did not like being trampled upon.

Then there was a great inquiry after the wonderful

nightingale, which all the world knew excepting the people at court.

At last they met with a poor little girl in the kitchen, who said:

"The nightingale? I know it well; yes, it can sing gloriously. Every evening I get leave to carry my poor sick mother the scraps from the table. She lives down by the strand; and when I get back and am tired, and rest in the wood, then I hear the nightingale sing. And then the water comes into my eyes, and it is just as if my mother kissed me."

"Little kitchen girl," said the cavalier, "I will get you a place in the kitchen, with permission to see the emperor dine, if you will but lead us to the nightingale, for it is announced for this evening."

So they all went out into the wood where the nightingale was accustomed to sing; half the court went forth. When they were in the midst of their journey a cow began to low.

"Oh!" cried the court pages, "now we have it! That shows a wonderful power in so small a creature! I have certainly heard it before."

"No, those are cows lowing," said the little kitchen girl. "We are a long way from the place yet."

Now the frogs began to croak in the marsh.

"Glorious!" said the Chinese court preacher. "Now I hear it—it sounds just like little church bells."

"No, those are frogs," said the little kitchen maid. "But now I think we shall soon hear it."

And then the nightingale began to sing.

"That is it!" exclaimed the little girl. "Listen, listen! and yonder it sits."

And she pointed to a little gray bird up in the boughs.

"Is it possible?" cried the cavalier. "I should never have thought it looked like that! How simple it looks!

It must certainly have lost its color at seeing such grand people around."

"Little nightingale!" called the little kitchen maid, quite loudly, "our gracious emperor wishes you to sing before him."

"With the greatest pleasure!" replied the nightingale, and began to sing most delightfully.

"It sounds just like glass bells!" said the cavalier. "And look at its little throat, how it's working! It's wonderful that we should never have heard it before. That bird will be a great success at court."

"Shall I sing once more before the emperor?" inquired the nightingale, for it thought the emperor was present.

"My excellent little nightingale," said the cavalier, "I have great pleasure in inviting you to a court festival this evening, when you shall charm his imperial majesty with your beautiful singing."

"My song sounds best in the green wood," replied the nightingale; still it came willingly when it heard what the emperor wished.

The palace was festively adorned. The walls and the flooring, which were of porcelain, gleamed in the rays of thousands of golden lamps. Artificial flowers, which could ring clearly, had been placed in the passages. There was a running to and fro, and a strong draught, and all the bells rang so loudly that one could not hear oneself speak.

In the midst of the great hall, where the emperor sat, a golden perch had been placed, on which the nightingale was to sit. The whole court was there, and the little cook-maid had got leave to stand behind the door, as she had now received the title of a real court cook. All were in full dress, and all looked at the little gray bird, to which the emperor nodded.

THE TEARS CAME TO THE EMPEROR'S EYES

And the nightingale sang so gloriously that the tears came into the emperor's eyes, and the tears ran down over his cheeks; then the nightingale sang still more sweetly—that went straight to the heart. The emperor was so much pleased that he said the nightingale should have his golden slipper to wear round its neck. But the nightingale declined this with thanks, saying it had already received a sufficient reward.

"I have seen tears in the emperor's eyes—that is the real treasure to me. An emperor's tears have a peculiar power. I am rewarded enough!" And then it sang again with a sweet, glorious voice.

"That's the most amiable coquetry I ever saw!" said the ladies who stood round about, and then they took water in their mouths to gurgle when anyone spoke to them. They thought they should be nightingales too. And the lackeys and chambermaids reported that they were satisfied also; and that was saying a great deal, for they are the most difficult to please. In short, the nightingale achieved a real success.

It was now to remain at court, to have its own cage, with liberty to go out twice every day and once at night. Twelve servants were appointed when the nightingale went out, each of whom had a silken string fastened to the bird's legs, which they held very tight. There was really no pleasure in an excursion of that kind.

The whole city spoke of the wonderful bird, and whenever two people met, one said nothing but "nightin," and the other said "gale"; and then they both sighed, and understood one another. Eleven peddlers' children were named after the bird, but not one of them could sing a note.

One day the emperor received a large parcel, on which was written "The Nightingale."

"There we have a new book about this celebrated bird," said the emperor.

It was not a book, but a little work of art, contained in a box, an artificial nightingale, which was to sing like a natural one, and was brilliantly ornamented with diamonds, sapphires, and rubies. So soon as the artificial bird was wound up, he could sing a song like the real nightingale, and then his tail moved up and down, and shone with silver and gold. Round his neck hung a little ribbon, and on that was written, "The emperor of China's nightingale is poor compared to that of the emperor of Japan."

"That is capital!" said they all, and he who had brought the artificial bird immediately received the title, Imperial-Head-Nightingale-Bringer.

"Now they must sing together; what a duet that will be!" cried the courtiers.

And so they had to sing together; but it did not sound very well, for the real nightingale sang its own way, and the artificial bird sang waltzes.

"That's not his fault," said the playmaster; "he's quite perfect, and very much in my style."

Now the artificial bird was to sing alone. He had just as much success as the real one, and then it was much handsomer to look at—it shone like bracelets and breastpins.

Three-and-thirty times over did it sing the same piece, and yet was not tired. The people would gladly have heard it again, but the emperor said that the living nightingale ought to sing something now. But where was it? No one had noticed that it had flown away out of the open window, back to the greenwood.

"But what has become of that?" asked the emperor.

And all the courtiers abused the nightingale, and declared that it was a very ungrateful creature.

"We have the best bird after all," said they.

And so the artificial bird had to sing again, and that was the thirty-fourth time that they listened to the same piece. For all that, they did not know it quite by heart, for it was so very difficult. And the play-master praised the bird particularly; yes, he declared that it was better than a nightingale, not only with regard to its plumage and the many beautiful diamonds, but inside as well.

"For you see, ladies and gentlemen, and above all, Your Imperial Majesty, with a real nightingale one can never calculate what is coming, but in this artificial bird, everything is settled. One can explain it; one can open it and make people understand where the waltzes come from, how they go, and how one follows up another."

"Those are quite our own ideas," they all said.

And the speaker received permission to show the bird to the people on the next Sunday. The people were to hear it sing too, the emperor commanded: and they did hear it, and were as much pleased as if they had all got tipsy upon tea, and held up their forefingers and nodded. But the poor fisherman, who had heard the real nightingale, said:

"It sounds pretty enough, and the melodies resemble each other, but there's something wanting, though I know not what!"

The real nightingale was banished from the country and empire. The artificial bird had its place on a silken cushion close to the emperor's bed; all the presents it had received, gold and precious stones, were ranged about it; in title it had advanced to be the High Imperial After-Dinner-Singer, and in rank to Number One on the left hand; for the emperor considered that side the most important on which the heart is placed,

and even in an emperor the heart is on the left side; and the playmaster wrote a work of five-and-twenty volumes about the artificial bird: it was very learned and very long, full of the most difficult Chinese words; but yet all the people declared that they had read it and understood it, for fear of being considered stupid, and having their bodies trampled on.

So a whole year went by. The emperor, the court, and all the other Chinese knew every little twitter in the artificial bird's song by heart. But just for that reason it pleased them best—they could sing with it themselves, and they did so. The street boys sang, "Tsi-tsi-tsi-glug-glug!" and the emperor himself sang it too. Yes, that was certainly famous.

But one evening, when the artificial bird was singing its best, and the emperor lay in bed listening to it, something inside the bird said "Whizz!" Something cracked. "Whir-r-r!" All the wheels ran round, and then the music stopped.

The emperor immediately sprang out of bed, and caused his body physician to be called; but what could *he* do? Then they sent for a watchmaker, and after a good deal of talking and investigation, the bird was put into something like order, but the watchmaker said that the bird must be carefully treated, for the barrels were worn, and it would be impossible to put new ones in in such a manner that the music would go. There was a great lamentation; only once in the year was it permitted to let the bird sing, and that was almost too much. But then the playmaster made a little speech, full of heavy words, and said this was just as good as before—and so of course it was as good as before.

Now five years had gone by, and a real grief came upon the whole nation. The Chinese were really fond of their emperor, and now he was ill, and could not,

it was said, live much longer. Already a new emperor had been chosen, and the people stood out in the street and asked the cavalier how the emperor did.

"Pf!" said he, and shook his head.

Cold and pale lay the emperor in his great, gorgeous bed; the whole court thought him dead, and each one ran to pay homage to the new ruler. The chamberlains ran out to talk it over, and the ladies' maids had a great coffee party. All about, in all the halls and passages, cloth had been laid down so that no footstep could be heard, and therefore it was quiet there, quite quiet. But the emperor was not dead yet: stiff and pale he lay on the gorgeous bed, with the long velvet curtains and the heavy gold tassels; high up, a window stood open, and the moon shone in upon the emperor and the artificial bird.

The poor emperor could scarcely breathe; it was just as if something lay upon his chest; he opened his eyes, and then he saw that it was Death who sat upon his chest, and had put on his golden crown, and held in one hand the emperor's sword, in the other his beautiful banner. And all around, from among the folds of the splendid velvet curtains, strange heads peered forth; a few very ugly, the rest quite lovely and mild. These were the emperor's bad and good deeds, that stood before him now that Death sat upon his heart.

"Do you remember this?" whispered one to the other. "Do you remember that?" and then they told him so much that the perspiration ran from his forehead.

"I did not know that!" said the emperor. "Music! music! the great Chinese drum!" he cried, "so that I need not hear all they say."

And they continued speaking, and Death nodded like a Chinese to all they said.

"Music! music!" cried the emperor. "You little precious golden bird, sing, sing! I have given you gold and costly presents; I have even hung my golden slipper around your neck—sing now, sing!"

But the bird stood still; no one was there to wind him up, and he could not sing without that; but Death continued to stare at the emperor with his great, hollow eyes, and it was quiet, fearfully quiet.

Then there sounded from the window, suddenly, the most lovely song. It was the little live nightingale, that sat outside on a spray. It had heard of the emperor's sad plight, and had come to sing to him of comfort and hope. As it sang the specters grew paler and paler; the blood ran quicker and more quickly through the emperor's weak limbs; and even Death listened, and said:

"Go on, little nightingale, go on!"

"But will you give me that splendid golden sword? Will you give me that rich banner? Will you give me the emperor's crown?"

And Death gave up each of these treasures for a song. And the nightingale sang on and on; and it sang of the quiet churchyard where the white roses grow, where the elder blossoms smell sweet, and where the fresh grass is moistened by the tears of survivors. Then Death felt a longing to see his garden, and floated out at the window in the form of a cold white mist.

"Thanks! thanks!" said the emperor. "You heavenly little bird; I know you well. I banished you from my country and empire, and yet you have charmed away the evil faces from my couch, and banished Death from my heart! How can I reward you?"

"You have rewarded me!" replied the nightingale. "I have drawn tears from your eyes, when I sang the first time—I shall never forget that. Those are the

jewels that rejoice a singer's heart. But now sleep, and grow fresh and strong again. I will sing you something."

And it sang, and the emperor fell into a sweet slumber. Ah! how mild and refreshing that sleep was! The sun shone upon him through the windows, when he awoke refreshed and restored: not one of his servants had yet returned, for they all thought he was dead; only the nightingale still sat beside him and sang.

"You must always stay with me," said the emperor. "You shall sing as you please; and I'll break the artificial bird into a thousand pieces."

"Not so," replied the nightingale. "It did well as long as it could; keep it as you have done till now. I cannot build my nest in the palace to dwell in it, but let me come when I feel the wish; then I will sit in the evening on the spray yonder by the window, and sing you something, so that you may be glad and thoughtful at once. I will sing of those who are happy and of those who suffer, I will sing of good and of evil that remains hidden round about you. The little singing bird flies far around, to the poor fisherman, to the peasant's roof, to every one who dwells far away from you and from your court. I love your heart more than your crown, and yet the crown has an air of sanctity about it. I will come and sing to you—but one thing you must promise me."

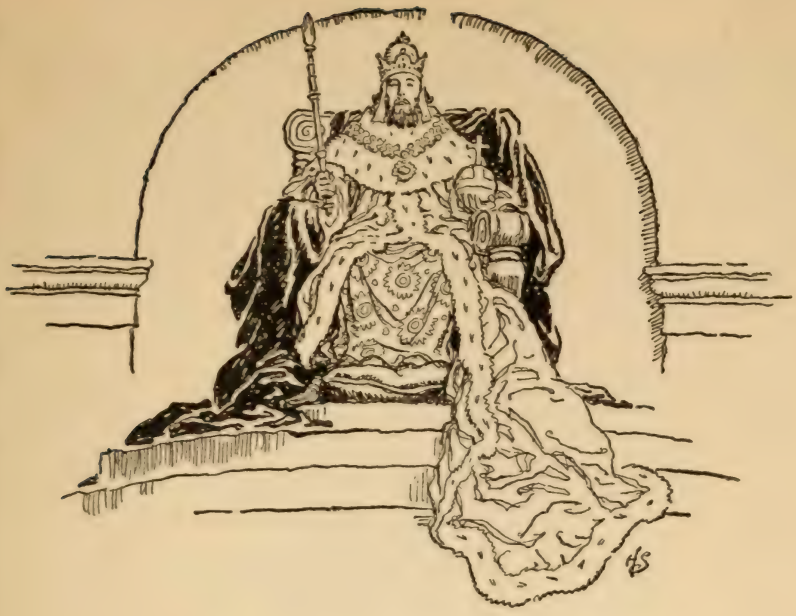
"Everything!" said the emperor; and he stood there in his imperial robes, which he had put on himself, and pressed the sword which was heavy with gold to his heart.

"One thing I beg of you: tell no one that you have a little bird who tells you everything. Then it will go all the better."

And the nightingale flew away.

The servants came in to look at their dead emperor, and—yes, there he stood, and the emperor said "Good morning!"

From *Fairy Tales and Stories,* a book including seventy-four stories by Hans Christian Andersen, translated by H. W. Dulcken. Published by A. L. Burt Company, New York, and reprinted by permission.



THE PROUD KING

By Horace E. Scudder

THERE was once a king who ruled over many lands; he went to war, and added one country after another to his kingdom. At last he came to be emperor, and that is as much as any man can be. One night, after he was crowned emperor, he lay awake and thought about himself.

"Surely," he said, "no one can be greater than I am, on earth or in heaven."

The proud king fell asleep with these thoughts. When he awoke, the day was fair, and he looked out on the pleasant world.

"Come," he said to the men about him; "to-day we will go a-hunting."

The horses were brought, the dogs came leaping,

the horns sounded, and the proud king with his courtiers rode off to the sport. They had hunted all the morning, and were now in a deep wood. In the fields the sun had beat upon their heads, and they were glad of the shade of the trees; but the proud king wished for something more. He saw a lake not far off, and he said to his men:

"Bide ye here, while I bathe in the lake and cool myself."

Then he rode apart till he came to the shore of the lake. There he got down from his horse, laid aside his clothes, and plunged into the cool water. He swam about, and sometimes dived beneath the surface, and so was once more cool and fresh.

Now while the proud king was swimming away from the shore and diving to the bottom, there came one who had the same face and form as the king. He drew near the shore, dressed himself in the king's clothes, mounted the king's horse and rode away. So when the proud king was once more cool and fresh, and came to the place where he had left his clothes and his horse, there were no clothes to be seen, and no horse.

The proud king looked about, but saw no man. He called, but no one heard him. The air was mild, but the wood was dark, and no sunshine came through to warm him after his cool bath. He walked by the shore of the lake and cast about in his mind what he should do.

"I have it," he cried at last. "Not far from here lives a knight. It was but a few days ago that I made him a knight and gave him a castle. I will go to him, and he will be glad enough to clothe his king."

The proud king wove some reeds into a mat and bound the mat about him, and then he walked to the castle of the knight. He beat loudly at the gate of

the castle and called for the porter. The porter came and stood behind the gate. He did not draw the bolt at once, but asked:

"Who is there?"

"Open the gate," said the proud king, "and you will see who I am."

The porter opened the gate, and was amazed at what he saw.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"Wretch!" said the proud king; "I am the emperor. Go to your master. Bid him come to me with clothes. I have lost both clothes and horse."

"A pretty emperor!" the porter laughed. "The great emperor was here not an hour ago. He came with his court from a hunt. My master was with him and sat at meat with him. But stay you here. I will call my master. Oh, yes! I will show him the emperor," and the porter wagged his beard and laughed, and went within.

He came forth again with the knight and pointed at the proud king.

"There is the emperor!" he said. "Look at him! Look at the great emperor!"

"Draw near," said the proud king to the knight, "and kneel to me. I gave thee this castle. I made thee knight. I give thee now a greater gift. I give thee the chance to clothe thy emperor with clothes of thine own."

"You dog!" cried the knight. "You fool! I have just ridden with the emperor, and have come back to my castle. Here!" he shouted to his servants, "beat this fellow and drive him away from the gate."

The porter looked on and laughed.

"Lay on well," he said to the other servants. "It is not every day that you can flog an emperor."

Then they beat the proud king, and drove him from the gate of the castle.

"Base knight!" said the proud king. "I gave him all he has, and this is how he repays me. I will punish him when I sit on my throne again. I will go to the duke who lives not far away. Him I have known all my days. He will know me. He will know his emperor."

So he came to the gate of the duke's great hall, and knocked three times. At the third knock the porter opened the gate, and saw before him a man clad only in a mat of reeds, and stained and bleeding.

"Go, I pray you, to the duke," said the proud king, "and bid him come to me. Say to him that the emperor stands at the gate. He has been robbed of his clothes and of his horse. Go quickly to your master."

The porter closed the gate between them, and went within to the duke.

"Your grace," said he, "there is a madman at the gate. He is unclad and wild. He bade me come to you and tell you that he was the emperor."

"Here is a strange thing indeed," said the duke; "I will see it for myself."

So he went to the gate, followed by his servants, and when the porter opened it there stood the proud king. The proud king knew the duke, but the duke saw only a bruised and beaten madman.

"Do you not know me?" cried the proud king. "I am your emperor. Only this morning you were on the hunt with me. I left you that I might bathe in the lake. While I was in the water, some wretch took both my clothes and my horse, and I—I have been beaten by a base knight."

"Put him in chains," said the duke to his servants.

"It is not safe to have such a man free. Give him some straw to lie on, and some bread and water."

The duke turned away and went back to his hall, where his friends sat at table.

"That was a strange thing," he said. "There was a madman at the gate. He must have been in the wood this morning, for he told me that I was on the hunt with the emperor, and so I was; and he told me that the emperor went apart to bathe in the lake, and so he did. But he said that some one stole the clothes and the horse of the emperor, yet the emperor rode back to us cool and fresh, and clothed and on his horse. And he said——" And the duke looked around on his guests.

"What did he say?"

"He said that he was the emperor."

Then the guests fell to talking and laughing, and soon forgot the strange thing. But the proud king lay in a dark prison, far even from the servants of the duke. He lay on straw, and chains bound his feet.

"What is this that has come upon me?" he said. "Am I brought so low? Am I so changed that even the duke does not know me? At least there is one who will know me, let me wear what I may."

Then, by much labor, he loosed the chains that bound him, and fled in the night from the duke's prison. When morning came, he stood at the door of his own palace. He stood there a while; perhaps some one would open the door and let him in. But no one came, and the proud king lifted his hand and knocked; he knocked at the door of his own palace. The porter came at last and looked at him.

"Who are you?" he asked. "And what do you want?"

"Do you not know me?" cried the proud king. "I

am your master. I am the king. I am the emperor. Let me pass"; and he would have thrust him aside. But the porter was a strong man; he stood in the doorway, and would not let the proud king enter.

"You my master! you the emperor! poor fool, look here!" and he held the proud king by the arm while he pointed to a hall beyond. There sat the emperor on his throne, and by his side was the queen.

"Let me go to her! She will know me," cried the poor king, and he tried to break away from the porter. The noise without was heard in the hall. The nobles came out, and last of all came the emperor and the queen. When the proud king saw these two, he could not speak. He was choked with rage and fear, and he knew not what.

"You know me!" at last he cried. "I am your lord and husband."

The queen shrank back.

"Friends," said the man who stood by her, "what shall be done to this wretch?"

"Kill him," said one.

"Put out his eyes," said another.

"Beat him," said a third.

Then they all hustled the proud king out of the palace court. Each one gave him a blow, and so he was thrust out, and the door was shut behind him.

The proud king fled, he knew not whither. He wished he were dead. By and by he came to the lake where he had bathed. He sat down on the shore. It was like a dream, but he knew that he was awake, for he was cold and hungry and faint. Then he knelt on the ground and beat his breast and said:

"I am no emperor. I am no king. I am a poor, sinful man. Once I thought there was no one greater than I, on earth or in heaven. Now I know that I am

nothing, and there is no one so poor and so mean. God forgive me for my pride."

As he said this, tears stood in his eyes. He wiped them away and rose to his feet. Close by him he saw his clothes which he had once laid aside. Near at hand was his horse, eating the soft grass. The king

put on his clothes; he mounted his horse, and rode to his palace. As he drew near, the door opened and servants came forth. One held his horse; another helped him dismount. The porter bowed low.

"I marvel I did not see thee pass out, my lord," he said.

The king entered, and again saw the nobles in the great hall. There stood the queen also, and by her

side was the man who called himself emperor. But the queen and the nobles did not look at him; they looked at the king, and came forward to meet him.

This man also came forward, but he was clad in shining white, and not in the robes of the emperor. The king bowed his head before him.

"I am thy angel," said the man. "Thou wert proud and made thyself to be set on high. Therefore thou hast been brought low. I have watched over thy kingdom. Now I give it back to thee, for thou art once again humble, and the humble only are fit to rule."

Then the angel disappeared. No one else heard his voice, and the nobles thought the king had bowed to them. So the king once more sat on the throne, and ruled wisely and humbly ever after.

One of eighteen mediæval and early Christian legends retold in *The Book of Legends*. Reprinted here by permission of Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston.

SAINT CHRISTOPHER

By Lilian Gask

THERE was once a man named Offero, so tall and strong that he stood among his fellows as a sturdy oak in a grove of saplings. His eyes were keen and clear as some great eagle's, his lips spoke nothing but gentle words, and his heart was as pure and tender as a little child's. His spirit was brave and fearless, and while he was yet in the prime of his strength he resolved to devote it to some good purpose.

"My friends," he said, when he had called together his companions, "I must leave you now, for something within me whispers that I was born to serve a king so great that fear is unknown to him; a king to whom all men bow."

Then he strode away into the forest and was seen of them no more.

For many a day he traversed valley and mountain, inquiring of all he met who was the greatest king. At last he came to a splendid country, where reigned a monarch of high renown. His armies were vast and powerful, and his fleet of warships was like a flock

of birds bearing death on their grim brown wings. When he was told that Offero desired to serve him, he welcomed him gladly, and liked the young man so well that he soon made him his trusted counselor and friend.

It was Offero's pride to see how all men trembled at his master's frown, and he could not believe that there lived a monarch greater than he. One day, however, when the king was present, a courtier made some remark about "the Evil One"; his majesty's august brow grew pale, and Offero could have sworn he saw his stern lips quiver. Pained and surprised, he humbly asked the king why he was troubled.

"I am afraid of the Devil," said that monarch, "although I fear no mortal man. He is the king of Hades, and more powerful than I."

"Then I must leave you, O King!" cried Offero with haste, "since I have vowed to serve none other than the most powerful monarch in existence." And sorrowfully he turned away.

"Where is the Devil?" he asked the first man he met.

"He is everywhere," returned the traveler, looking round uneasily; and this was the usual answer that Offero received to his inquiry. Wherever he went men looked uneasy at the Devil's name, but would not say where Offero was most likely to meet with him.

He found him at last among a group of idle men and maidens on the village green, and hailed him as his master. The Devil was glad to have so strong a follower, and amused himself by showing the astonished giant his power over rich and poor. There seemed to be no limit to his might; he swayed the nobles in their velvet robes, and the peasants in their tattered garments.

"He is indeed master of the world," sighed Offero,

and though he liked not the Devil's ways, he stifled his distaste that he might keep his word.

One day his master led him through the outskirts of the town into the open country.

"We are going to visit a hermit," he said with a burst of laughter. "He has left the town to be quit of me, but he will find me in his cave!"

Before Offero could ask him what he meant to do with the good hermit, they came to a turn where four roads met. A rough wind swayed the branches of the trees, and a peal of thunder echoed among the lofty hills. It was neither wind nor thunder, however, that made the Devil tremble, but the sight of a wooden cross which some pious folk had erected here. With gaunt arms pointing east and west it stood immovable; the rain beat down on it mercilessly, as if to cleanse it from the roadside dust; and turning his head away that he might not see it, the Devil hastened past. Not until it was far behind them had Offero an opportunity of asking why he had trembled.

"I was afraid," answered his grim companion, with another shudder.

"Afraid?" repeated Offero in puzzled tones. "Why, what was there to be afraid of?"

"Did you not see the crucifix?" cried the Devil impatiently. "The figure on it is that of the Christ, and this is why I trembled."

The giant had never heard that Holy Name before, and felt more perplexed than ever as he demanded: "Who is this Christ whom you so fear?"

"He is the King of Heaven," was the reluctant reply.

"Is He more powerful, then, than you?" persisted Offero, planting himself in the center of the pathway so that his master could not pass on.

"He is more powerful even than I!" admitted the Devil, his eyes becoming points of fire.

"Then I shall serve Him, and Him only," the giant cried, and, turning on his heel, he left the Devil to go on his way alone.

When Offero reached the cross once more, a man was kneeling before it in prayer. As he rose from his knees, Offero asked him the way to Heaven."

"I cannot tell you," said the man. "The way is long, and hard to find. 'Tis well that Christ is merciful."

Offero met with like answers from many wayfarers whom he questioned, but at last came one who advised him to consult the hermit.

"He is a holy man," he assured him earnestly, "and has retired from the world that he may give his time to prayer and fasting. He thinks he can serve Christ this way better than any other."

So Offero sought the hermit, and learnt from him many things. He heard of the grandeur and goodness of Christ, and of the greatness of His Kingdom. All that he said made Offero more eager to serve Him than ever, and when the hermit explained that no one could enter the Heavenly Kingdom until he was summoned there by Christ Himself, he bowed his head in disappointment.

"How then can I serve this new Master," he said, "unless I can see Him and hear His commands?"

"Do as I do," replied the hermit. "Give up the world, and fast and pray."

"If I were to fast," said Offero shrewdly, "I should lose my strength, and then, when He called me to work for Him, I should be useless." And although the hermit tried to persuade him, he would not stay, but set off again on his journey, determined to find the way to Heaven.

Presently he met a company of pilgrims. They were dusty and travel-stained, and very footsore, but their faces shone with joy. There were men and women and little children; some came from distant lands, and some from near, but one and all they were filled with a deep content.

"Who are you, and whence do you travel?" Offero asked them wonderingly.

"We are servants of Christ," they answered, "and we are marching toward Heaven. The path is rough, and the way is long, but His many mansions await us."

"I will come with you, and be His servant too!" said Offero, and they welcomed him gladly.

The way was long, as they had said, but to the giant the days passed quickly. He was learning so much that he could scarcely sleep for the wonder of it, and his face also shone with happiness. He grew very grave when he heard of the swift-flowing river that all must cross before they could hope to reach the Kingdom of Heaven.

"There is no bridge to span it," said an aged pilgrim, whose tottering limbs were now so feeble that but for Offero's support they would hardly have borne him along. "The trembling woman, the little child, must cross it alone in the gloom and darkness, for though they call, no friendly boatman appears in sight. When Christ has need of us, His messenger will appear; he is clothed in raiment white as snow, and although his voice is always gentle, it is clearly heard in the rush and roar of the tempest as on a summer's day."

At length the pilgrims came to the river bank, and as the giant gazed at the foaming current, and saw the waves dashing against the shore, he marveled greatly at what he had been told. Surely, he thought, no feeble

woman or little child could breast its waters and reach the other side.

Even as he mused on this the white-robed messenger called to an ailing girl who was almost too weak to move. Her Master had need of her, he said, and in the fair courts of Heaven she would be strong again.

What joy was hers when she heard his voice! But alas! when she crept to the edge of the bank, and saw the river that swept beneath it, her heart grew sick with fear. She quivered and shook from head to foot, and moaned that she dare not venture. An exceeding pity moved Offero to go to her help.

"Do not weep," he said, "but trust to me." And taking her tenderly in his arms, he lifted her onto his shoulder, and bore her tenderly across. In spite of all his strength, the pitiless current nearly swept him off his feet, and he fought with the icy waters as he had fought no mortal foe. The girl tried in vain to thank him as he placed her on the bank in safety; he would not let her speak.

"Tell Christ," he said, "that I am His servant, and that until He shall summon me to His side I will help His pilgrims to cross the River of Death."

From henceforth this was his work. He had no time to wonder when his own call would come, for day and night there arrived at the banks of the river pilgrims from every clime, and since few had courage to face the dark waters alone, he crossed and recrossed it continually. In order that he might be always at hand, he built himself a rough log-hut by the waterside, and here he made his home.

One night when the waves rolled fiercely and the wind blew high, Offero laid him down to sleep.

Surely, he thought, no one would dare to cross in such a storm. His eyes had scarcely closed, however, when he heard a knocking at the door.

"Who are you?" he cried as he threw it open. There was no answer, and by the light of his lantern he saw a wistful child on the river bank. He was staring down at the rushing waters with piteous dread, but the tone of his voice was clear and firm as he turned and spoke to Offero.

"I must cross to-night," he said. Offero looked at him with deep compassion.

"Poor child!" he murmured. "I am glad I heard you. With a tide like this it will be difficult even for me, giant as I am, but you would be swept away."

With gentle hands he placed the boy on his shoulder, and bidding him not to fear, set out for the opposite shore.

He had not over-estimated the difficulties he had to face. Time after time he was beaten backward, and the icy waters nearly engulfed them both. It took all his strength to bear up against them, and the weight of the child seemed greater than that of the heaviest man he had ever borne. When at last he climbed the steep, high bank, he was bruised as well as breathless, for the hidden rocks had worked him grievous harm.

"Tell Christ——" he panted. And then he saw that the figure beside him was not that of a little child, but of a radiant Being of kingly mien, with a crown of glory on His brow. The giant knelt before Him, and the vision smiled.

"I am the Christ," He said, "whom thou hast served so long. This night thou hast borne Me across the River of Death. . . . Thou didst find Me a heavy burden, for I bore the sins of the world."

Then He named Giant Offero "Christopher," meaning "He who hath carried Christ," and took him to dwell with Him in His Heavenly Kingdom.

From the author's *Folk Tales from Many Lands,* a well-balanced collection of twenty-three stories; illustrated with picturesque woodcuts. Reprinted by arrangement with the Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York.

THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

By Dinah Mulock Craik

ONCE there was a royal couple who grieved excessively because they had no children. When at last, after long waiting, the queen presented her husband with a little daughter, his majesty showed his joy by giving a christening feast, so grand that the like of it was never known. He invited all the fairies in the land—there were seven altogether—to stand godmothers to the little princess, hoping that each might bestow on her some good gift, as was the custom of good fairies in those days.

After the ceremony all the guests returned to the palace, where there was set before each fairy godmother a magnificent covered dish, with an embroidered table-napkin, and a knife and fork of pure gold,

studded with diamonds and rubies. But, alas! as they placed themselves at table, there entered an old fairy who had never been invited, because more than fifty years since she had left the king's dominion on a tour of pleasure, and had not been heard of until this day. His majesty, much troubled, desired a cover to be placed for her; but it was of common delf, for he had ordered from his jeweler only seven gold dishes for the seven fairies aforesaid. The elderly fairy thought herself neglected, and muttered angry menaces, which were overheard by one of the younger fairies, who chanced to sit beside her. This good godmother, afraid of harm to the pretty baby, hastened to hide herself behind the tapestry in the hall. She did this because she wished all the others to speak first, so that, if any ill gift were bestowed on the child, she might be able to counteract it.

The six now offered their good wishes—which, unlike most wishes, were sure to come true. The fortunate little princess was to grow up the fairest woman in the world; to have a temper sweet as an angel; to be perfectly graceful and gracious; to sing like a nightingale; to dance like a leaf on a tree; and to possess every accomplishment under the sun. Then the old fairy's turn came. Shaking her head spitefully, she uttered the wish that when the baby grew up into a young lady, and learned to spin, she might prick her finger with the spindle and die of the wound.

At this terrible prophecy all the guests shuddered, and some of the more tender-hearted began to weep. The lately happy parents were almost out of their wits with grief. Upon which the wise young fairy appeared from behind the tapestry, saying cheerfully, "Your majesties may comfort yourselves: the princess shall not die. I have no power to alter the ill fortune just

wished by my ancient sister—her fingers must be pierced; and she shall then sink, not into the sleep of death, but into a sleep that will last a hundred years. After that time is ended the son of a king will find her, awaken her, and marry her."

Immediately all the fairies vanished.

The king, in the hope of avoiding his daughter's doom, issued an edict forbidding all persons to spin, or even to have spinning wheels in their houses, on pain of instant death. But it was in vain. One day, when she was just fifteen years of age, the king and queen left their daughter alone in one of their castles, when, wandering about at her will, she came to an ancient donjon tower, climbed to the top of it, and there found a very old woman—so old and deaf that she had never heard of the king's edict—busy with her wheel.

"What are you doing, good old woman?" said the princess.

"I'm spinning, my pretty child."

She had no sooner taken up the spindle than, being lively and obstinate, she handled it so awkwardly and carelessly that the point pierced her finger. Though it was so small a wound she fainted away at once, and dropped silently down on the floor. The poor frightened old woman called for help; shortly came the ladies in waiting, who tried every means to restore their young mistress, but all their care was useless. She lay, beautiful as an angel, the color still lingering in her lips and cheeks; her fair bosom softly stirred with her breath: only her eyes were fast closed. When the king her father and the queen her mother beheld her thus, they knew regret was idle—all had happened as the cruel fairy meant. But they also knew that their daughter would not sleep for ever, though after

one hundred years it was not likely that either of them would behold her awakening. Until that happy hour should arrive, they determined to leave her in repose. They sent away all the physicians and attendants, and themselves sorrowfully laid her upon a bed of embroidery, in the most elegant apartment of the palace. There she slept, and looked like a sleeping angel.

When this misfortune happened the kindly young fairy who had saved the princess by changing her sleep of death into this sleep of a hundred years was twelve thousand leagues away in the kingdom of Mataquin. But being informed of everything, she arrived speedily, in a chariot of fire drawn by dragons. The king was somewhat startled by the sight, but nevertheless went to the door of his palace, and, with a mournful countenance, presented her his hand to descend.

The fairy condoled with his majesty, and approved of all he had done. Then, being a fairy of great common sense and foresight, she suggested that the princess, awakening after a hundred years in this ancient castle, might be greatly embarrassed, especially with a young prince by her side, to find herself alone. Accordingly, without asking anyone's leave, she touched with her magic wand the entire population of the palace—except the king and queen; governesses, ladies of honour, waiting-maids, gentlemen ushers, cooks, kitchen-girls, pages, footmen—down to the horses that were in the stables, and the grooms that attended them, she touched each and all. Nay, with kind consideration for the feelings of the princess, she even touched the little fat lap dog, Puffy, who had laid himself down beside his mistress on her splendid bed. He, like all the rest, fell fast asleep in a moment. The very spits that were before the kitchen fire ceased turning, and the fire itself went out, and everything

became as silent as if it were the middle of the night, or as if the palace were a palace of the dead.

The king and queen—having kissed their daughter and wept over her a little, but not much, she looked so sweet and content—departed from the castle, giving orders that it was to be approached no more. The command was unnecessary: in one quarter of an hour there sprang up around it a wood so thick and thorny that neither beasts nor men could attempt to penetrate there. Above this dense mass of forest could only be perceived the top of the high tower where the lovely princess slept.

A great many changes happen in a hundred years. The king, who never had a second child, died, and his throne passed to another royal family. So entirely was the story of the poor princess forgotten that when the

reigning king's son, being one day out hunting and stopped in the chase by this formidable wood, inquired what wood it was and what were those towers which he saw appearing out of the midst of it, no one could answer him. At length an old peasant was found who remembered having heard his grandfather say to his father that in this tower was a princess, beautiful as the day, who was doomed to sleep there for one hundred years, until awakened by a king's son, her destined bridegroom.

At this the young prince, who had the spirit of a hero, determined to find out the truth for himself. Spurred on by both generosity and curiosity, he leaped from his horse and began to force his way through the thick wood. To his amazement the stiff branches all gave way, and the ugly thorns sheathed themselves of their own accord, and the brambles buried themselves in the earth to let him pass. This done, they closed behind him, allowing none of his suite to follow; but, ardent and young, he went boldly on alone.

The first thing he saw was enough to smite him with fear. Bodies of men and horses lay extended on the ground; but the men had faces, not death-white, but red as peonies, and beside them were glasses half filled with wine, showing that they had gone to sleep drinking. Next he entered a large court, paved with marble, where stood rows of guards presenting arms, but motionless as if cut out of stone; then he passed through many chambers where gentlemen and ladies, all in the costume of the past century, slept at their ease, some standing, some sitting. The pages were lurking in corners, the ladies of honor were stooping over their embroidery frames, or listening, apparently with polite attention, to the gentlemen of the court; but all were as silent as statues and as immovable. Their clothes,

strange to say, were almost as fresh and new as ever; and hardly a particle of dust or spider webs had gathered over the furniture, though it had not known a broom for a hundred years. Finally the astonished prince came to an inner chamber, where was the fairest sight his eyes had ever beheld.

A young girl of wonderful beauty lay asleep on an embroidered bed, and she looked as if she had only just closed her eyes. Trembling, the prince approached and knelt beside her. Some say he kissed her; but as nobody saw it, and she never told, we cannot be quite sure of that. However, as the end of the enchantment had come, the princess awakened at once, and looking at him with eyes of the tenderest regard, said drowsily, "Is it you, my prince? I have waited for you very long."

Charmed with these words, and still more with the tone in which they were uttered, the prince assured her that he loved her more than his life. Nevertheless, he was the more embarrassed of the two; for, thanks to the kind fairy, the princess had plenty of time to dream of him during her century of slumber, while he had never even heard of her till an hour before. For a long time did they sit conversing, and yet had not said half enough. Their only interruption came from the little dog Puffy, who had awakened with his mistress, and now began to be exceedingly jealous that the princess did not notice him as much as she was wont to do.

Meantime all the attendants, whose enchantment was also broken, not being in love, were ready to die of hunger after their fast of a hundred years. A lady of honor ventured to intimate that dinner was served; whereupon the prince handed his beloved princess at once to the great hall. She did not wait to dress for

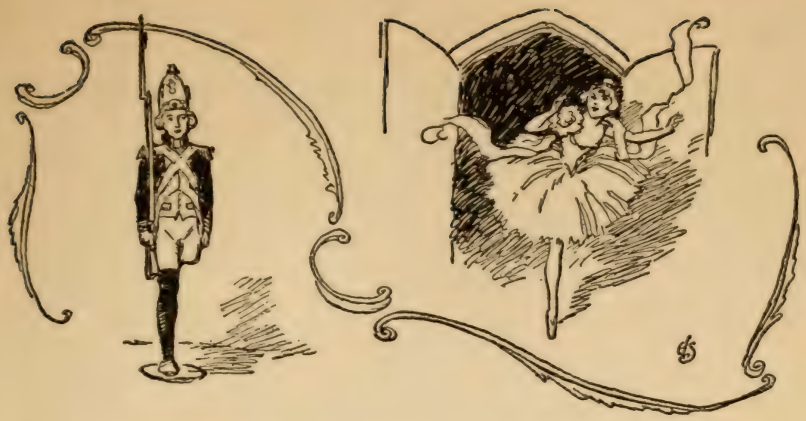
dinner, being already perfectly and magnificently attired, though in a fashion somewhat out of date. However, her lover had the politeness not to notice this, nor to remind her that she was dressed exactly like her royal grandmother, whose portrait still hung on the palace walls.

During the banquet a concert took place by the attendant musicians, and considering that they had not touched their instruments for a century, they played extremely well. They ended with a wedding march; for that very evening the marriage of the prince and princess was celebrated, and though the bride was nearly one hundred years older than the bridegroom, it is remarkable that the fact would never have been discovered by anyone unacquainted therewith.

After a few days they went together out of the castle and the enchanted wood, both of which immediately vanished, and were never more beheld by mortal eyes. The princess was restored to her ancestral kingdom; but it was not generally declared who she was, as during a hundred years people had grown so very much wiser that nobody then living would ever have believed the story. So nothing was explained, and nobody presumed to ask any questions about her, for ought not a prince to be free to marry whomsoever he pleases?

Nor—whether or not the day of fairies was over—did the princess ever see anything further of her seven godmothers. She lived a long and happy life, like any other ordinary woman, and died at length, beloved, regretted, but, the prince being already no more, perfectly contented.

One of the thirty-five fairy tales Dinah Mulock (Mrs. Craik) has rewritten in *The Fairy Book*. Published by the Macmillan Company, New York, and reprinted by permission.



THE STEADFAST TIN SOLDIER

By Hans Christian Andersen

THERE were once five-and-twenty tin soldiers; they were brothers, for they had all been cast from an old tin spoon. They shouldered their muskets and looked straight before them; and their uniforms were splendid in red and blue. The first thing they heard in the world, when the lid was taken off the box in which they lay, were the words "Tin Soldiers!" shouted by a little boy, as he clapped his hands in glee. The soldiers had been given to him on his birthday, and now he joyfully set them out on the table. Each soldier was exactly like every other, except one, and he had but one leg. He had been cast last of all, and there had not been enough tin to finish him, but he stood as firm on his one leg as the others on their two; and he is the very one that became remarkable.

On the table on which the soldiers had been placed stood many other playthings, but the toy that attracted most attention was a delightful castle of cardboard. Through the little windows one could look straight

into the rooms. Before the castle stood a number of little trees, round a little looking-glass which was to represent a lake. Wax swans swam on this lake and were mirrored in it. All this was very pretty; but the prettiest of all was a little lady who stood in the open doorway of the castle. She, too, was cut out of paper, but she had a dress of the clearest gauze, and a little narrow blue ribbon, that looked like a scarf, over her shoulders; and in the middle of this ribbon was a shining tinsel rose as large as her whole face. The little lady stretched out both her arms, for she was a dancer; and she lifted one leg so high that the Tin Soldier could not see it at all, and thought that, like himself, she had but one.

"That would be just the wife for me!" thought he; "but she is very grand. She lives in a castle, while I have only a box, and there are five-and-twenty of us about that. It is no place for her! But still I must try and make her acquaintance!"

Then he lay down at full length behind a snuffbox which stood on the table; there he could easily watch the dainty little lady, who continued to stand on one leg without losing her balance.

Along in the evening all the other tin soldiers were put into their box, and the people in the house went to bed. Now the toys began to play at "visiting," and at "war," and at "having dances." The tin soldiers rattled in their box, for they wanted to join the fun; but they could not lift the lid. The nutcracker threw somersaults, and the pencil amused itself on the slate; there was so much noise that the canary awoke, and began to take part in the conversation, and that in verse. The only two who did not stir from their places were the Tin Soldier and the Dancing Lady; she stood straight up on the points of her toes, and stretched out

both her arms; he was equally steady on his one leg; and he never turned his eyes away from her a single moment.

The clock struck twelve—and, pop! the lid flew off the snuffbox. There was no snuff in it, oh, no! but there was a little black Goblin. It was a Jack-in-the-box, you see.

"Tin Soldier!" said the Goblin. "Keep your eyes to yourself, will you!"

But the Tin Soldier pretended not to hear him.

"Just you wait till to-morrow!" said the Goblin.

When morning came and the children were out of bed, the Tin Soldier was placed in the window; and whether it was the Goblin or a draft that did it, all at once the window flew open, and the Soldier fell head over heels down from the third story. That was a terrible fall! His leg stuck straight up in the air, and thus he remained standing, with helmet downward and his bayonet between the paving stones.

The servant girl and the little boy came down directly to look for him, but though they almost trod upon him, they could not see him. If the Soldier had shouted, "Here I am!" they would surely have found him; but he did not think it fitting that a soldier

dressed in full uniform, as he was, should cry out loudly.

It now began to rain; the drops fell faster and faster, and soon it was streaming down. When the shower was over, two street boys came by.

"Look!" said one of them, "there lies a tin soldier. He must have a boat ride."

So they made a boat out of a newspaper, put the Tin Soldier in the middle of it, and away he sailed down the gutter. The two boys ran along beside him and clapped their hands. Goodness preserve us! how the waves rose in that gutter, and what a current! You see it had been a very heavy shower. The paper boat rocked up and down, and sometimes spun round so quickly that the Tin Soldier trembled; but he didn't move, and never changed countenance; he looked straight before him, holding his musket.

All at once the boat went into a long drain, and it became as dark as it had been in his box.

"Where am I going now?" he thought. "Yes, yes, it is all the Goblin's fault! Ah! If the little lady were only sitting here in the boat with me, it might be twice as dark for all I should care."

Just then a great Water Rat, which lived in the drain, came up to the boat.

"Have you a passport?" asked the Rat. "Out with your passport!"

But the Tin Soldier kept silence, and held his musket tighter than ever.

The boat rushed on, and the Rat after it. My! how he gnashed his teeth, and shouted to the straws and bits of wood:

"Stop him! Stop him! He hasn't paid toll—he hasn't shown his passport!"

But the current ran faster and faster. The Tin Soldier could already see the bright daylight where the drain ended; but he heard a terrible roaring noise that was indeed enough to frighten the bravest of men. Just think, where the tunnel ended, the drain dropped into a great canal; and for him that was as dangerous as for us to be carried down a great waterfall.

He was already so near it that he could not stop. The boat rushed out, the poor Tin Soldier stiffening himself as much as he could, and no one could say that he had as much as blinked. The boat whirled round three or four times, and was full of water to the very edge. It would surely sink. The Tin Soldier stood up to his neck in water, the boat sank deeper and deeper, the paper grew more and more limp. Then the water closed over the Soldier's head. He thought of the pretty little Dancer, and that he would never see her again; and in the Soldier's ears rang the song:

Farewell, farewell, thou warrior brave,
For thou must die this day!

Then the paper boat went to pieces, and the Tin Soldier fell through; but at that moment he was swallowed up by a great fish.

Oh, how dark it was! It was worse even than in the drain; and it was very narrow, too. But the Tin Soldier remained calm, and lay at full length, gripping his musket.

The fish rushed about, making the most fearful movements, and then became quite still. After a long time something suddenly flashed through it like a gleam of lightning. It was now quite light, and a voice exclaimed loudly, "The Tin Soldier!"

The fish had been caught, carried to market, and

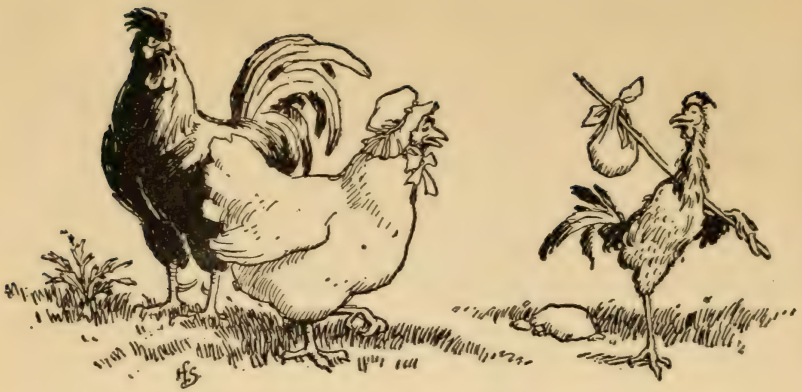
sold. It had been taken into the kitchen, where the cook had cut it open with a large knife. She seized the Soldier round the body with two fingers, and carried him into the living room. All were anxious to see the remarkable man that had traveled about inside of a fish; but the Tin Soldier was not at all proud. They placed him on the table, and there—what curious things may happen in this world! The Tin Soldier was in the very room in which he had been before! He saw the same children, and the same toys stood on the table; there was the pretty castle with the graceful little Dancer. She was still balancing herself on one leg, and held the other high in the air. She, too, remained steadfast. That moved the Tin Soldier; he was very near weeping tin tears, but that would not have been proper. He looked at her and she looked at him, but they said nothing.

Just then one of the little boys took the Tin Soldier and flung him into the stove. He gave no reason at all for doing this. It must have been the fault of the Goblin in the snuffbox.

The Tin Soldier stood there in the bright glow, and felt a heat that was terrible; but whether this heat proceeded from the real fire or from the love within him he did not know. His colors had vanished; but whether that had happened on the journey or had been caused by grief, no one could say. He looked at the little lady, she looked at him, and he felt that he was melting; but he still stood firm, shouldering his musket. Then suddenly the door flew open, a draft of air caught the Dancer, and she flew like a sylph right into the stove to the Tin Soldier; she flashed up in a flame, and was gone. Then the Tin Soldier melted into a lump; and next day, when the servant maid took out the ashes, she found him in the shape of a

little tin heart. But of the Dancer nothing remained except the tinsel rose, and that was burned as black as a coal.

Among other tales in Valdemar Paulsen's translation of *Andersen's Fairy Tales* (Windemere Edition). Published by Rand, McNally and Company, Chicago, and reprinted with their permission.



THE STORY OF COQUERICO

By Edouard Laboulaye

ONCE upon a time there was a handsome hen who lived like a great lady in the poultry yard of a rich farmer, surrounded by a numerous family which clucked about her, and none of which clamored more loudly or picked up the corn faster with his beak than a poor little deformed and crippled chicken. This was precisely the one that the mother loved best. It is the way with all mothers; the weakest and most unsightly are always their favorites. This misshapen creature had but one eye, one wing, and one leg in good condition; it might have been thought that Solomon had executed his memorable sentence on Coquerico, for that was the name of the wretched chicken, and cut him in two with his famous sword. When a person is one-eyed, lame, and one-armed, he may reasonably be expected to be modest; but our Castilian ragamuffin was prouder than his father, the best spurred, most elegant, bravest, and most gallant cock to be seen from Burgos to Madrid. He thought himself a phoenix of grace and beauty, and passed the best

part of the day in admiring himself in the brook. If one of his brothers ran against him by accident, he abused him, called him envious and jealous, and risked his only remaining eye in battle; if the hens clucked on seeing him, he said it was to hide their spite because he did not condescend to look at them.

One day, when he was more puffed up with vanity than usual, he resolved no longer to remain in such a narrow sphere, but to go out into the world, where he would be better appreciated.

"My lady mother," said he, "I am tired of Spain; I am going to Rome to see the pope and cardinals."

"What are you thinking of, my poor child!" cried his mother. "Who has put such a folly into your head? Never has one of our family been known to quit his country, and, for this reason, we are the honor of our race, and are proud of our genealogy. Where will you find a poultry yard like this—mulberry trees to shade you, a whitewashed henroost, a magnificent dunghill, worms and corn everywhere, brothers that love you, and three great dogs to guard you from the foxes? Do you not think that at Rome itself you will regret the ease and plenty of such a life?"

Coquerico shrugged his crippled wing in token of disdain. "You are a simple woman, my good mother," said he; "everything is accounted worthy of admiration by him who has never quitted his dunghill. But I have wit enough to see that my brothers have no ideas, and that my cousins are nothing but rustics. My genius is stifling in this hole; I wish to roam the world and seek my fortune."

"But, my son, have you never looked in the brook?" resumed the poor hen. "Don't you know that you lack an eye, a leg, and a wing? To make your fortune, you need the eyes of a fox, the legs of a spider, and the

wings of a vulture. Once outside of these walls, you are lost."

"My good mother," replied Coquerico, "when a hen hatches a duck, she is always frightened on seeing it run to the water. You know me no better. It is my nature to succeed by my wit and talent. I must have a public capable of appreciating the charms of my person; my place is not among inferior people."

"My son," said the hen, seeing all her counsels useless, "my son, listen at least to your mother's last words. If you go to Rome, take care to avoid St. Peter's Church; the saint, it is said, dislikes cocks, especially when they crow. Shun, moreover, certain personages called cooks and scullions; you will know them by their paper caps, their tucked-up sleeves, and the great knives which they wear at their sides. They are licensed assassins, who track our steps without pity, and cut our throats without giving us time to cry mercy. And now, my child," she added, raising her claw, "receive my blessing. May St. James, the patron saint of pilgrims, protect thee!"

Coquerico pretended not to see the tear that trembled in his mother's eye, nor did he trouble himself any more about his father, who bristled his plumage and seemed about to call him back. Without caring for those whom he left behind, he glided through the half-open door, and, once outside, flapped his only wing and crowed three times, to celebrate his freedom—"Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

As he half flew, half hopped over the fields, he came to the bed of a brook which had been dried up by the sun. In the middle of the sands, however, still trickled a tiny thread of water, so small that it was choked by a couple of dead leaves that had fallen into it.

"My friend," exclaimed the streamlet at the sight of our traveler, "my friend, you see my weakness; I have not even the strength to carry away these leaves which obstruct my passage, much less to make a circuit, so completely am I exhausted. With a stroke of your beak you can restore me to life. I am not an ingrate; if you oblige me, you may count on my gratitude the first rainy day, when the water from heaven shall have restored my strength.

"You are jesting?" said Coquerico. "Do I look like one whose business it is to sweep the brooks? Apply to those of your own sort." And, with his sound leg, he leaped across the streamlet.

"You will remember me when you least expect it," murmured the brook, but with so feeble a voice that it was lost on the proud cock.

A little farther on, Coquerico saw the wind lying breathless on the ground.

"Dear Coquerico, come to my aid," it cried; "here on earth we should help each other. You see to what I am reduced by the heat of the day; I, who in former times uprooted the olive trees and lashed the waves of frenzy, lie here well-nigh slain by the Dog Star. I suffered myself to be lulled to sleep by the perfume of the roses with which I was playing; and lo! here I am, stretched almost lifeless upon the ground. If you will raise me a couple of inches with your beak and fan me a little with your wing, I shall have the strength to mount to yonder white clouds which I see in the distance, where I shall receive aid enough from my family to keep me alive till I gain fresh strength from the next whirlwind."

"My lord," answered the spiteful Coquerico, "your excellency has more than once amused himself by playing tricks at my expense. It is not a week since your

lordship glided like a traitor behind me, and diverted himself by opening my tail like a fan and covering me with confusion in the face of nations. Have patience, therefore, my worthy friend; mockers always have their turn; it does them good to repent, and to learn to respect those whose birth, wit, and beauty should screen them from the jests of a fool." And Coquerico, bristling his plumage, crowed three times in his shrillest voice and proudly strutted onward.

A little farther on he came to a newly mown field, where the farmers had piled up the weeds in order to burn them. Coquerico approached a smoking heap, hoping to find some stray kernels of corn, and saw a little flame which was charring the green stalks without being able to set them on fire.

"My good friend," cried the flame to the newcomer, "you are just in time to save my life; I am dying for want of air. I cannot imagine what has become of my cousin, the wind, who cares for nothing but his own amusement. Bring me a few dry straws to rekindle my strength, and you will not have obliged an ingrate."

"Wait a moment," said Coquerico, "and I will serve you as you deserve, insolent fellow that dares ask my help!" And behold! he leaped on the heap of dried weeds, and trampled it down till he smothered both flame and smoke; after which he exultingly shouted three times "cock-a-doodle-doo!" and flapped his wings, as if he had done a great deed.

Proudly strutting onward and crowing, Coquerico at last arrived at Rome, the place to which all roads lead. Scarcely had he reached the city when he hastened to the great church of St. Peter. Grand and beautiful as it was, he did not stop to admire it, but, planting himself in front of the main entrance, where he looked like a fly among the great columns, he raised

himself on tiptoe and began to shout "Cock-a-doodle-doo!" only to enrage the saint and disobey his mother.

He had not yet ended his song when one of the pope's guard, who chanced to hear him, laid hands on the insolent wretch who dared thus to insult the saint, and carried him home in order to roast him for supper.

"Quick!" said he to his wife on entering the house, "give me some boiling water; here is a sinner to be punished."

"Pardon, pardon, Madam Water!" cried Coquerico. "Oh, good and gentle water, the best and purest thing in the world, do not scald me, I pray you!"

"Did you have pity on me when I implored your aid, ungrateful wretch?" answered the water, boiling with indignation. And with a single gush it inundated him from head to foot, and left not a bit of down on his body.

The unhappy Coquerico stripped of all his feathers, the soldier took him and laid him on the gridiron.

"Oh, fire, do not burn me!" cried he, in an agony of terror. "Oh, beautiful and brilliant fire, the brother of the sun and the cousin of the diamond, spare an unhappy creature; restrain thy ardor, and soften thy flame; do not roast me!"

"Did you have pity on me when I implored your aid, ungrateful wretch?" answered the fire, and, fiercely blazing with anger, in an instant it burnt Coquerico to a coal.

The soldier, seeing his roast chicken in this deplorable condition, took him by the leg and threw him out of the window. The wind bore the unhappy fowl to a dunghill, where it left him for a moment.

"Oh, wind," murmured Coquerico, who still breathed, "oh, kindly zephyr, protecting breeze, be-

hold me cured of my vain follies; let me rest on the paternal dunghill."

"Let you rest!" roared the wind. "Wait, and I will teach you how I treat ingrates." And with one blast it sent him so high in the air that, as he fell back, he was transfixed by a steeple.

There St. Peter was awaiting him. With his own

hand he nailed him to the highest steeple in Rome, where he is still shown to travelers. However high placed he may be, all despise him because he turns with the slightest wind; black, dried up, stripped of his feathers, and beaten by the rain, he is no longer called Coquerico, but Weathercock; and thus expiates, and must expiate eternally, his disobedience, vanity, and wickedness.

One of twelve folk tales retold in so witty and distinguished a manner that they have all the charm of fresh inventions. They have been translated from the French under the title of *Laboulaye's Fairy Book* by Mary L. Booth. By permission of Harper and Brothers, New York.

THE TOWN MOUSE AND THE COUNTRY MOUSE

By Peter Christen Asbjörnsen

ONCE upon a time a town mouse met a country mouse on the outskirts of a wood. The country mouse was sitting under a hazel thicket plucking nuts.

"Busy harvesting, I see," said the town mouse. "Who would think of our meeting in this out-of-the-way part of the world?"

"Just so," said the country mouse.

"You are gathering nuts for your winter store?" said the town mouse.

"I am obliged to do so if we intend having anything to live upon during the winter," said the country mouse.

"The husk is big and the nut full this year, enough to satisfy any hungry body," said the town mouse.

"Yes, you are right there," said the country mouse; and then she related how well she lived and how comfortable she was at home.

The town mouse maintained that she was the better off, but the country mouse said that nowhere could one be so well off as in the woods and hills. The town mouse, however, declared she was best off; and as they

could not agree on this point they promised to visit one another at Christmas, they then could see for themselves which was really the most comfortable.

The first visit was to be paid by the town mouse.

Now, although the country mouse had moved down from the mountains for the winter, the road was long and tiring, and one had to travel up hill and down dale; the snow lay thick and deep, so the town mouse found it hard work to get on, and she became both tired and hungry before she reached the end of her journey.

How nice it will be to get some food, she thought.

The country mouse had scraped together the best she had. There were nut kernels, polypody and other sorts of roots, and many other good things which grow in woods and fields. She kept it all in a hole far under the ground, so the frost could not reach it, and close by was a running spring, open all the winter, so she could drink as much water as she liked. There was an abundance of all she had, and they ate both well and heartily; but the town mouse thought it was poor fare indeed.

"One can, of course, keep body and soul together on this," said she; "but I don't think much of it. Now you must be good enough to visit me and taste what we have."

Yes, that she would, and before long she set out. The town mouse had gathered together all scraps from the Christmas fare which the woman of the house had dropped on the floor during the holidays—bits of cheese, butter and tallow ends, cake crumbs, pastry and many other good things. In the dish under the ale tap she had drink enough; in fact the place was full of all kinds of dainties.

They ate and fared well; the country mouse seemed never to have had enough; she had never tasted such

delicacies. But then she became thirsty, for she found the food both strong and rich, and now she wanted something to drink.

"We haven't far to go for the beer we shall drink," said the town mouse, and jumped upon the edge of the dish and drank till she was no longer thirsty; she did not drink too much, for she knew the Christmas beer was strong. The country mouse, however, thought the beer a splendid drink; she had never tasted anything but water, so she took one sip after another, but as she could not stand strong drink she became tipsy before she left the dish.

The drink got into her head and down into her toes and she began running and jumping about from one beer barrel to the other, and to dance and tumble about on the shelves among the cups and mugs; she squeaked and screeched as if she were both drunk and mad.

"You must not carry on as if you had just come from the backwoods and make such a row and noise," said the town mouse; "the master of the house is a bailiff and he is very strict indeed," she added.

The country mouse said she didn't care either for bailiffs or beggars. But the cat sat at the top of the cellar steps, lying in wait, and heard all the chatter and noise. When the woman of the house went down to draw some beer and lifted the trap-door the cat slipped by into the cellar and struck its claws into the country mouse. Then there was quite another sort of dance.

The town mouse slid back into her hole and sat in safety looking on, while the country mouse suddenly became sober when she felt the claws of the cat in her back.

"Oh, my dear bailiff, oh, dearest bailiff, be merciful and spare my life and I will tell you a fairy tale," she said.

"Well, go on," said the cat.

"Once upon a time there were two little mice," said the country mouse, squeaking slowly and pitifully, for she wanted to make the story last as long as she could.

"Then they were not lonely," said the cat dryly and curtly.

"And they had a steak which they were going to fry."

"Then they could not starve," said the cat.

"And they put it out on the roof to cool," said the country mouse.

"Then they did not burn themselves," said the cat.

"But there came a fox and a crow and ate it all up," said the country mouse.

"Then I'll eat you," said the cat. But just at that moment the woman shut the trapdoor with a slam, which so startled the cat that she let go her hold of the mouse. One bound and the country mouse found herself in the hole with the town mouse.

From there a passage led out into the snow, and you may be sure the country mouse did not wait long before she set out homeward.

"And this is what you call living well and being best off," she said to the town mouse. "Heaven preserve me from having such a fine place and such a master! Why, I only just got away with my life!"

From *Fairy Tales from the Far North,* a compilation of thirty-seven Norwegian folk tales translated by H. L. Braekstad. Reprinted by permission of A. L. Burt Company, New York.

THE TRAVELING MUSICIANS

By the Brothers Grimm

AN honest farmer had once an ass that had been a faithful servant to him a great many years, but was now growing old and every day more and more unfit for work. His master therefore was tired of keeping him and began to think of putting an end to him; but the ass, who saw that some mischief was in the wind, took himself slyly off, and began his journey toward the great city, "for there," thought he, "I may turn musician."

After he had traveled a little way, he spied a dog lying by the roadside and panting as if he were very tired. "What makes you pant so, my friend?" said the ass. "Alas!" said the dog, "my master was going to knock me on the head, because I am old and weak, and can no longer make myself useful to him in hunting; so I ran away: but what can I do to earn my livelihood?" "Hark ye!" said the ass, "I am going to the great city to turn musician: suppose you go with me, and try what you can do in the same way?" The dog said he was willing, and they jogged on together.

They had not gone far before they saw a cat sitting in the middle of the road and making a most rueful face. "Pray, my good lady," said the ass, "what's the matter with you? you look quite out of spirits!" "Ah me!" said the cat, "how can one be in good spirits when one's life is in danger? Because I am beginning to grow old, and had rather lie at my ease by the fire than run about the house after the mice, my mistress laid hold of me, and was going to drown me; and though I have been lucky enough to get away from her, I do not know what I am to live upon." "Oh!" said the ass, "by all means go with us to the great city; you are a good night singer, and may make your fortune as a musician." The cat was pleased with the thought, and joined the party.

Soon afterward, as they were passing by a farmyard, they saw a cock perched upon a gate, and screaming out with all his might and main, "Bravo!" said the ass; "upon my word you make a famous noise; pray what is all this about?" "Why," said the cock, "I was just now saying that we should have fine weather for our washing day, and yet my mistress and the cook don't thank me for my pains, but threaten to cut off my head to-morrow, and make broth of me for the guests that are coming on Sunday!" "Heaven forbid!" said the ass; "come with us, Master Chanticleer; it will be better, at any rate, than staying here to have your head cut off! Besides, who knows? If we take care to sing in tune, we may get up some kind of a concert: so come along with us." "With all my heart," said the cock; so they all four went on jollily together.

They could not, however, reach the great city the first day; so when night came on, they went into a wood to sleep. The ass and the dog laid themselves down under a great tree, and the cat climbed up into the

branches; while the cock, thinking that the higher he sat the safer he should be, flew up to the very top of the tree, and then, according to his custom, before he went to sleep, looked out on all sides of him to see that everything was well. In doing this, he saw afar off something bright and shining; and calling to his companions said, "There must be a house no great way off, for I see a light." "If that be the case," said the ass, "we had better change our quarters, for our lodging is not the best in the world!" "Besides," added the dog, "I should not be the worse for a bone or two, or a bit of meat." So they walked off together toward the spot where Chanticleer had seen the light; and as they drew near, it became larger and brighter, till they at last came close to a house in which a gang of robbers lived.

The ass, being the tallest of the company, marched up to the window and peeped in. "Well, Donkey," said Chanticleer, "what do you see?" "What do I see?" replied the ass. "Why I see a table spread with all kinds of good things, and robbers sitting round it making merry." "That would be a noble lodging for us," said the cock. "Yes," said the ass, "if we could only get in": so they consulted together how they should contrive to get the robbers out; and at last they hit upon a plan. The ass placed himself upright on his hind-legs, with his forefeet resting against the window; the dog got upon his back; the cat scrambled up to the dog's shoulders, and the cock flew up and sat upon the cat's head. When all was ready, a signal was given, and they began their music. The ass brayed, the dog barked, the cat mewed, and the cock screamed; and then they all broke through the window at once, and came tumbling into the room, amongst the broken glass, with a most hideous clatter! The robbers, who

had been not a little frightened by the opening concert, had now no doubt that some frightful hobgoblin had broken in upon them, and scampered away as fast as they could.

The coast once clear, our travelers soon sat down, and dispatched what the robbers had left, with as much eagerness as if they had not expected to eat again for a month. As soon as they had satisfied themselves, they put out the lights, and each once more sought out a resting place to his own liking. The donkey laid himself down upon a heap of straw in the yard; the dog stretched himself upon a mat behind the door; the cat rolled herself up on the hearth before the warm ashes; and the cock perched upon a beam on the top of the house; and, as they were all rather tired with their journey, they soon fell asleep.

But about midnight, when the robbers saw from afar that the lights were out and that all seemed quiet, they began to think that they had been in too great a hurry to run away; and one of them, who was bolder than the rest, went to see what was going on. Finding everything still, he marched into the kitchen, and groped about till he found a match in order to light a candle; and then, espying the glittering fiery eyes of the cat, he mistook them for live coals, and held the match to them to light it. But the cat, not understanding this joke, sprung at his face, and spit, and scratched at him. This frightened him dreadfully, and away he ran to the back door; but there the dog jumped up and bit him in the leg; and as he was crossing over the yard the ass kicked him; and the cock, who had been awakened by the noise, crowed with all his might. At this the robber ran back as fast as he could to his comrades, and told the captain how "a horrid witch had got into the house, and had spit at him and scratched his face

with her long bony fingers; how a man with a knife in his hand had hidden himself behind the door, and stabbed him in the leg; how a black monster stood in the yard and struck him with a club, and how the devil sat upon the top of the house and cried out, 'Throw the rascal up here!'" After this the robbers never dared to go back to the house: but the musicians were so pleased with their quarters, that they took up their abode there; and there they are, I dare say, at this very day.

One of fifty-five rugged German folk and fairy tales in *Popular Stories* by the Brothers Grimm. Published by the Oxford University Press, and reprinted with their permission.

THE UGLY DUCKLING

By Hans Christian Andersen

IT was glorious out in the country. It was summer, and the cornfields were yellow, and the oats were green; the hay had been put up in stacks in the green meadows, and the stork went about on his long red legs and chattered Egyptian, for this language he had learned from his mother. All around the fields and meadows were great forests, and in the midst of these forests lay deep lakes. Yes, it was really glorious out in the country. In the midst of the sunshine there lay an old manor, surrounded by deep canals, and from the wall down to the water grew great burdocks, so high that little children could stand upright under the loftiest of them. It was just as wild there as in the

deepest wood. Here sat a duck upon her nest, for she had to hatch her young ones; but she was almost tired out before the little ones came; and then she so seldom had visitors. The other ducks liked better to swim about in the canals than to run up to sit down under a burdock, and gossip with her.

At last one eggshell after another burst open. "Piep! piep!" it cried, and in all the eggs there were little creatures that stuck out their heads.

"Rap! rap!" she said; and they all came rapping out as fast as they could, looking all round them under the green leaves; and the mother let them look as much as they chose, for green is good for the eyes.

"How wide the world is!" said the young ones, for they certainly had much more room now than when they were in the eggs.

"Do you think this is all the world?" asked the mother. "That extends far across the other side of the garden, quite into the parson's field, but I have never been there yet. I hope you are all together," she continued, and stood up. "No, I have not all. The largest egg still lies there. How long is that to last? I am really tired of it." And she sat down again.

"Well, how goes it?" asked an old duck who had come to pay her a visit.

"It lasts a long time with that one egg," said the duck who sat there. "It will not burst. Now, only look at the others; are they not the prettiest ducklings one could possibly see? They are all like their father: the bad fellow never comes to see me."

"Let me see the egg which will not burst," said the old visitor. "Believe me, it is a turkey's egg. I was once cheated in that way, and had much anxiety and trouble with the young ones, for they are afraid of the water. I could not get them to venture in. I quacked

and clucked, but it was no use. Let me see the egg. Yes, that's a turkey's egg! Let it lie there, and teach the other children to swim." "I think I will sit on it a little longer," said the duck. "I've sat so long now that I can sit a few days more."

"Just as you please," said the old duck; and she went away.

At last the great egg burst. "Piep! piep!" said the little one, and crept forth. It was very large and very ugly. The duck looked at it.

"It's a very large duckling," said she; "none of the others look like that: can it really be a turkey chick? Now we shall soon find it out. It must go into the water, even if I have to kick it in myself."

The next day the weather was splendidly bright, and the sun shone on all the green burdocks. The mother duck went down to the water with all her little ones. Splash, she jumped into the water. "Quack! quack!" she said, and one duckling after another plunged in. The water closed over their heads, but they came up in an instant, and swam capitally; their legs went of themselves, and there they were all in the water. The ugly gray duckling swam with them.

"No, it's not a turkey," said she; "look how well it can use its legs, and how upright it holds itself. It is my own child! On the whole it's quite pretty, if one looks at it rightly. Quack! quack! come with me, and I'll lead you out into the great world, and present you in the poultry yard; but keep close to me, so that no one may tread on you, and take care of the cat!"

And so they came into the poultry yard. There was a terrible riot going on there, for two families were quarreling about an eel's head, and the cat got it after all.

"See, that's how it goes in the world!" said the

mother duck; and she whetted her beak, for she, too, wanted the eel's head. "Only use your legs," she said. "See that you can bustle about, and bow your heads before the old duck yonder. She's the grandest of all here; she's of Spanish blood—that's why she's so fat; and do you see, she has a red rag round her leg; that's something particularly fine, and the greatest distinction a duck can enjoy: it signifies that one does not want to lose her, and that she's to be recognized by man and beast. Shake yourselves—don't turn in your toes; a well-brought-up duck turns its toes quite out, just like father and mother, so! Now bend your necks and say 'Rap!'"

And they did so; but the other ducks round about looked at them, and said quite boldly,

"Look there! now we're to have these hanging on as if there were not enough of us already! And—fie!—how that duckling yonder looks; we won't stand it!" And one duck flew up immediately, and bit it in the neck.

"Let it alone," said the mother; "it does no harm to anyone."

"Yes, but it's too large and peculiar," said the duck who had bitten it; "and therefore it must be buffeted."

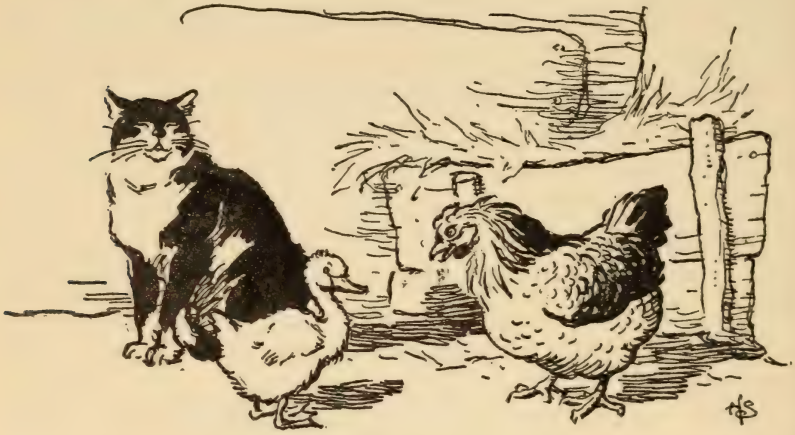
"Those are pretty children that the mother has there," said the old duck with the rag round her leg. "They're all pretty but that one; that was a failure. I wish she could alter it."

"That cannot be done, my lady," replied the mother duck. "It is not pretty, but it has a really good disposition, and swims as well as any other; I may even say it swims better. I think it will grow to be pretty, and become smaller in time; it has lain too long in the egg, and therefore is not properly shaped." And then she pinched it in the neck, and smoothed its feathers.

"Moreover, it is a drake," she said, "and therefore it is not of so much consequence. I think he will be very strong: he will make his way all right."

"The other ducklings are graceful enough," said the old duck. "Make yourself at home; and if you find an eel's head, you may bring it to me."

And now they were at home. But the poor duckling which had crept last out of the egg, and looked so ugly, was bitten and pushed and jeered at, as much by the ducks as by the chickens.



"It is too big!" they all said. And the turkey cock, who had been born with spurs, and therefore thought himself an emperor, blew himself up like a ship in full sail, and bore straight down upon it; then he gobbled, and grew quite red in the face. The poor duckling did not know where it should stand or walk; it was quite melancholy because it looked ugly, and was scoffed at by the whole yard.

So it went on the first day; and afterward it became worse and worse. The poor duckling was hunted about by every one; even its brothers and sisters were quite

angry with it, and said, "If the cat would only catch you, you ugly creature!" And the mother said, "If you were only far away!" And the ducks bit it, and the chickens beat it, and the girl who had to feed the poultry kicked it.

Then it ran and flew over the fence, and the little birds in the bushes flew up in fear.

"That is because I am so ugly!" thought the duckling; and it shut its eyes, but flew on farther; thus it came out into the great moor, where the wild ducks lived. Here it lay the whole night long; and it was weary and downcast.

Toward morning the wild ducks flew up, and looked at their new companion.

"What sort of a one are you?" they asked and the duckling turned in every direction, and bowed as well as it could. "You are remarkably ugly!" said the wild ducks. "But that is very indifferent to us, so long as you do not marry into our family."

Poor thing! it certainly did not think of marrying, and only hoped to obtain leave to lie among the reeds and drink some of the swamp water.

Thus it lay two whole days; then came thither two wild geese, or, properly speaking, two wild ganders. It was not long since each had crept out of an egg, and that's why they were so saucy.

"Listen, comrade," said one of them, "you're so ugly that I like you. Will you go with us, and become a bird of passage? Near here, in another moor, there are a few sweet lovely wild geese, all unmarried, and all able to say 'Rap!' You've a chance of making your fortune, ugly as you are!"

"Piff! paff!" resounded through the air; and the two ganders fell down dead in the swamp, and the water became blood-red. "Piff! paff!" it sounded again, and

whole flocks of wild geese rose up from the reeds. And then there was another report. A great hunt was going on. The hunters were lying in wait all round the moor, and some were even sitting up in the branches of the trees, which spread far over the reeds. The blue smoke rose up like clouds among the dark trees, and was wafted far away across the water; and the hunting dogs came—splash, splash!—into the swamp, and the rushes and the reeds bent down on every side. That was a fright for the poor duckling! It turned its head, and put it under its wing; but at that moment a frightful great dog stood close by the duckling. His tongue hung far out of his mouth and his eyes gleamed horrible and ugly; he thrust out his nose close against the duckling, showed his sharp teeth, and—splash, splash!—on he went, without seizing it.

"Oh, Heaven be thanked!" sighed the duckling. "I am so ugly, that even the dog does not like to bite me!"

And so it lay quite quiet, while the shots rattled through the reeds and gun after gun was fired. At last, late in the day, silence was restored; but the poor duckling did not dare to rise up; it waited several hours before it looked round, and then hastened away out of the marsh as fast as it could. It ran on over field and meadow; there was such a storm raging that it was difficult to get from one place to another.

Toward evening the duck came to a little miserable peasant's hut. This hut was so dilapidated that it did not know on which side it should fall; and that's why it remained standing. The storm whistled round the duckling in such a way that the poor creature was obliged to sit down, to resist it; and the tempest grew worse and worse. Then the duckling noticed that one of the hinges of the door had given way, and the door

hung so slanting that the duckling could slip through the opening into the room; and did so.

Here lived an old woman, with her tomcat and her hen. And the tomcat, whom she called Sonnie, could arch his back and purr, he could even give out sparks; but for that one had to stroke his fur the wrong way. The hen had quite little short legs, and therefore she was called Chickabiddy-Shortshanks; she laid good eggs, and the woman loved her as her own child.

In the morning the strange duckling was at once noticed, and the tomcat began to purr, and the hen to cluck.

"What's this?" said the woman, and looked all round; but she could not see well, and therefore she thought the duckling was a fat duck that had strayed. "This is a rare prize!" she said. "Now I shall have duck's eggs. I hope it is not a drake. We must try that."

And so the duckling was admitted on trial for three weeks. And the tomcat was master of the house, and the hen was the lady, and always said, "We and the world!" for they thought they were half the world, and by far the better half. The duckling thought one might have a different opinion, but the hen would not allow it.

"Can you lay eggs?" she asked.

"No."

"Then you'll have the goodness to hold your tongue."

And the tomcat said, "Can you curve your back, and purr, and give out sparks?"

"No."

"Then you cannot have any opinions of your own when sensible people are speaking."

And the duckling sat in a corner and was melancholy; then the fresh air and the sunshine streamed

in; and it was seized with such a strange longing to swim on the water, that it could not help telling the hen of it.

"What are you thinking of?" cried the hen. "You have nothing to do, that's why you have these fancies. Purr or lay eggs, and they will pass over!"

"But it is so charming to swim on the water!" said the duckling, "so refreshing to let it close above one's head, and to dive down to the bottom."

"Yes, that must be a mighty pleasure truly," quoth the hen. "I fancy you must have gone crazy. Ask the cat about it—he's the cleverest animal I know—ask him if he likes to swim on the water, or to dive down: I won't speak about myself. Ask our mistress, the old woman; no one in the world is cleverer than she. Do you think she has any desire to swim, and to let the water close above her head?"

"You don't understand me," said the duckling.

"We don't understand you? Then pray who is to understand you? You surely don't pretend to be cleverer than the tomcat and the woman—I won't say anything of myself. Don't be conceited, child, and be grateful for all the kindness you have received. Did you not get into a warm room, and have you not fallen into company from which you may learn something? But you are a chatterer, and it is not pleasant to associate with you. You may believe me, I speak for your good. I tell you disagreeable things; and by that one may always know one's true friends! Only take care that you learn to lay eggs, or to purr and give out sparks!"

"I think I will go out into the wide world," said the duckling.

"Yes, do go," replied the hen.

And the duckling went away. It swam on the water,

and dived, but it was slighted by every creature because of its ugliness.

Now came the autumn. The leaves in the forest turned yellow and brown; the wind caught them so that they danced about, and up in the air it was very cold. The clouds hung low, heavy with hail and snowflakes, and on the fence stood the raven, crying, "Croak! croak!" for mere cold; yes, it was enough to make one feel cold to think of this. The poor little duckling certainly had not a good time. One evening—the sun was just setting in his beauty—there came a whole flock of great handsome birds out of the bushes; the duckling had never before seen anything so beautiful; they were dazzlingly white, with long flexible necks; they were swans. They uttered a very peculiar cry, spread forth their glorious great wings, and flew away from that cold region to warmer lands, to open lakes. They mounted so high, so high; and the ugly little duckling felt quite strangely as it watched them. It turned round and round in the water like a wheel, stretched out its neck toward them, and uttered such a strange loud cry as frightened itself. Oh! it could not forget those beautiful, happy birds; and so soon as it could see them no longer, it dived down to the very bottom, and when it came up again, it was quite beside itself. It knew not the name of those birds, and knew not whither they were flying; but it loved them more than it had ever loved anyone. It was not at all envious of them. How could it think of wishing to possess such loveliness as they had? It would have been glad if only the ducks would have endured its company—the poor ugly creature!

And the winter grew cold, very cold! The duckling was forced to swim about in the water, to prevent the surface from freezing entirely; but every night the hole

in which it swam about became smaller and smaller. It froze so hard that the icy covering crackled again; and the duckling was obliged to use its legs continually to prevent the hole from freezing up. At last it became exhausted, and lay quite still, and thus froze fast into the ice.

Early in the morning a peasant came by, and when he saw what had happened, he took his wooden shoe, broke the ice crust to pieces, and carried the duckling home to his wife. Then it came to itself again. The children wanted to play with it; but the duckling thought they would do it an injury, and in its terror fluttered up into the milk pan, so that the milk spurted down into the room. The woman screamed and clapped her hands, at which the duckling flew down into the butter tub, and then into the meal barrel and out again. How it looked then! The woman screamed, and struck at it with the fire tongs; the children tumbled over one another, in their efforts to catch the duckling; and how they laughed and screamed! Happily the door stood open, and the poor creature was able to slip out between the shrubs into the newly fallen snow; and there it lay quite exhausted.

But it would be too melancholy if I were to tell all the misery and care which the duckling had to endure in the hard winter. It lay out on the swamp among the reeds, when the sun began to shine again and the larks to sing; it was a beautiful spring.

Then all at once the duckling raised its wings: they beat the air more strongly than before, and bore it strongly away; and before it well knew how all this happened, it found itself in a great garden, where the apple trees stood in blossom, where the lilac flowers smelt sweet, and hung their long green branches down to the winding canals. Oh, here it was so beautiful,

such a gladness of spring! and from the thicket came three glorious white swans; they rustled their wings, and swam lightly on the water. The duckling knew the splendid creatures, and felt oppressed by a peculiar sadness.

"I will fly away to them, to the royal birds! and they will kill me, because I, that am so ugly, dare to approach them. But it is of no consequence! Better to be killed by *them* than to be pursued by ducks, and beaten by fowls, and pushed about by the girl who takes care of the poultry yard, and to suffer hunger in win-

ter!" And it flew out into the water, and swam toward the beautiful swans: these looked at it, and came sailing down upon it with outspread wings. "Kill me!" said the poor creature, and bent its head down upon the water, expecting nothing but death. But what was this that it saw in the clear water? It beheld its own image; and, lo! it was no longer a clumsy dark gray bird, ugly and hateful to look at, but—a swan!

It matters nothing if one is born in a duck yard, if one has only lain in a swan's egg.

It felt quite glad at all the need and misfortune it had suffered, now it realized its happiness and all the splendor that surrounded it. And the great swans swam round it, and stroked it with their beaks.

Into the garden came little children, who threw bread and corn into the water; and the youngest cried, "There is a new one!" and the other children shouted joyously, "Yes, a new one has arrived!" And they clapped their hands and danced about, and ran to their father and mother; and bread and cake were thrown into the water; and they all said, "The new one is the most beautiful of all! so young and handsome!" and the old swans bowed their heads before him.

Then he felt quite ashamed, and put his head under his wing, for he did not know what to do; he was so happy, and yet not at all proud. He thought how he had been persecuted and despised; and now he heard them saying that he was the most beautiful of all birds. Even the elder tree bent its branches straight down into the water before him, and the sun shone warm and mild. Then his wings rustled, he lifted his slender neck, and cried rejoicingly from the depths of his heart.

"I never dreamed of so much happiness when I was still the ugly duckling!"

A favorite among the sixty Andersen stories in *Fairy Tales and Other Stories*. The edition used here is that of W. A. and J. K. Craigie, published by the Oxford University Press, New York, and reprinted here with their permission.

WHY THE SEA IS SALT

By Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen

ONCE on a time, but it was a long, long time ago, there were two brothers, one rich and one poor.

Now, one Christmas Eve, the poor one had not so much as a crumb in the house, either of meat or bread, so he went to his brother to ask him for something with which to keep Christmas. It was not the first time his brother had been forced to help him, and, as he was always stingy, he was not very glad to see him this time, but he said, "I'll give you a whole piece of bacon, two loaves of bread, and candles into the bargain, if you'll never bother me again—but mind you don't set foot in my house from this day on."

The poor brother said he wouldn't, thanked his brother for the help he had given him, and started on his way home.

He hadn't gone far before he met an old, old man with a white beard, who looked so thin and worn and hungry that it was pitiful to see him.

"In heaven's name give a poor man a morsel to eat," said the old man.

"Now, indeed, I have been begging myself," said

the poor brother, "but I'm not so poor that I can't give you something on the blessed Christmas Eve." And with that he handed the old man a candle, a loaf of bread, and he was just going to cut off a slice of bacon, when the old man stopped him. "That is enough and to spare," said he. "And now, I'll tell you something. Not far from here is the entrance to the home of the underground folk. They have a mill there which can grind out anything they wish for except bacon; now mind you go there. When you get inside they will all want to buy your bacon, but don't sell it unless you get in return the mill which stands behind the door. When you come out I'll teach you how to handle the mill."

So the man with the bacon thanked the other for his good advice and followed the directions which the old man had given him, and soon he stood outside the door of the hillfolk's home.

When he got in, everything went just as the old man had said. All the hillfolk, great and small, came swarming up to him, like ants around an ant hill, and each tried to outbid the other for the bacon.

"Well," said the man, "by rights, my old dame and I ought to have this bacon for our Christmas dinner; but, since you have all set your hearts on it, I suppose I must give it up to you. Now, if I sell it at all, I'll have for it that mill behind the door yonder."

At first the hillfolk wouldn't hear of such a bargain and higgled and haggled with the man, but he stuck to what he said, and at last they gave up the mill for the bacon.

When the man got out of the cave and into the woods again, he met the same old beggar and asked him how to handle the mill. After he had learned how to use it, he thanked the old man and went off home as fast as he could; but still the clock had struck

twelve on Christmas Eve before he reached his own door.

"Wherever in the world have you been?" said the old dame. "Here have I sat hour after hour, waiting and watching, without so much as two sticks to lay together under the Christmas porridge."

"Oh!" said the man, "I could not get back before, for I had to go a long way first for one thing and then for another; but now you shall see what you shall see."

So he put the mill on the table, and bade it first of all grind lights, then a tablecloth, then meat, then ale, and so on till they had everything that was nice for Christmas fare. He had only to speak the word and the mill ground out whatever he wanted. The old dame stood by blessing her stars, and kept on asking where he had got this wonderful mill, but he wouldn't tell her.

"It's all the same where I got it. You see the mill is a good one, and the mill stream never freezes. That's enough."

So he ground meat and drink and all good things to last out the whole Christmas holidays, and on the third day he asked all his friends and kin to his house and gave them a great feast. Now, when his rich brother saw all that was on the table and all that was in the cupboards, he grew quite wild with anger, for he could not bear that his brother should have anything.

" 'Twas only on Christmas Eve," he said to the rest, "he was so poorly off that he came and begged for a morsel of food, and now he gives a feast as if he were a count or a king," and he turned to his brother and said, "But where in the world did you get all this wealth?"

"From behind the door," answered the owner of the mill, for he did not care to tell his brother much about it. But later in the evening, when he had gotten a

little too merry, he could keep his secret no longer, and he brought out the mill and said:

"There you see what has gotten me all this wealth," and so he made the mill grind all kinds of things.

When his brother saw it, he set his heart on having the mill, and, after some talk, it was agreed that the rich brother was to get it at hay-harvest time, when he was to pay three hundred dollars for it. Now, you may fancy the mill did not grow rusty for want of work, for while he had it the poor brother made it grind meat and drink that would last for years. When hay-harvest came, the rich brother got it, but he was in such a hurry to make it grind that he forgot to learn how to handle it.

It was evening when the rich brother got the mill home, and next morning he told his wife to go out into the hayfield and toss hay while the mowers cut the grass, and he would stay at home and get the dinner ready. So, when dinner time drew near, he put the mill on the kitchen table and said:

"Grind herrings and broth, and grind them good and fast."

And the mill began to grind herrings and broth; first of all the dishes full, then all the tubs full, and so on till the kitchen floor was quite covered. The man twisted and twirled at the mill to get it to stop, but for all his fiddling and fumbling the mill went on grinding, and in a little while the broth rose so high that the man was nearly drowning. So he threw open the kitchen door and ran into the parlor, but it was not long before the mill had ground the parlor full too, and it was only at the risk of his life that the man could get hold of the latch of the house door through the stream of broth. When he got the door open, he ran out and

set off down the road, with the stream of herrings and broth at his heels, roaring like a waterfall over the whole farm.

Now, his old dame, who was in the field tossing hay, thought it a long time to dinner, and at last she said:

"Well! though the master doesn't call us home, we may as well go. Maybe he finds it hard work to boil the broth, and will be glad of my help.

The men were willing enough, so they sauntered homeward. But just as they had got a little way up the hill, what should they meet but herrings and broth, all running and dashing and splashing together in a stream, and the master himself running before them for his life, and as he passed them he called out: "Eat, drink! eat, drink! but take care you're not drowned in the broth."

Away he ran as fast as his legs would carry him to

his brother's house, and begged him in heaven's name to take back the mill, and that at once, for, said he, "If it grinds only one hour more, the whole parish will be swallowed up by herrings and broth."

So the poor brother took back the mill, and it wasn't long before it stopped grinding herrings and broth.

And now he set up a farmhouse far finer than the one in which his brother lived, and with the mill he ground so much gold that he covered it with plates of gold. And, as the farm lay by the seaside, the golden house gleamed and glistened far away over the sea. All who sailed by put ashore to see the rich man in the golden house, and to see the wonderful mill the fame of which spread far and wide, till there was nobody who hadn't heard of it.

So one day there came a skipper who wanted to see the mill, and the first thing he asked was if it could grind salt.

"Grind salt!" said the owner, "I should just think it could. It can grind anything."

When the skipper heard that, he said he must have the mill, for if he only had it, he thought, he need not take his long voyages across stormy seas for a lading of salt. He much preferred sitting at home with a pipe and a glass. Well, the man let him have it, but the skipper was in such a hurry to get away with it that he had no time to ask how to handle the mill. He got on board his ship as fast as he could and set sail. When he had sailed a good way off, he brought the mill on deck and said, "Grind salt, and grind both good and fast."

And the mill began to grind salt so that it poured out like water, and when the skipper had got the ship full he wished to stop the mill, but whichever way he turned it, and however much he tried, it did no good;

the mill kept on grinding, and the heap of salt grew higher and higher, and at last down sank the ship.

There lies the mill at the bottom of the sea, and grinds away to this very day, and that is the reason why the sea is salt—so some folks say.

From *East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon,* a volume containing twenty-two Norwegian folk tales, retold by Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen, vivid, adventurous, preserving the vigor and humor of the originals. Published by Row, Peterson and Company, Chicago, and reprinted with permission.

THE WILD SWANS

By Hans Christian Andersen

FAR away, there where the swallows fly in winter, lived a king who had eleven sons and one daughter, Elise. The eleven brothers, the princes, went to school wearing stars on their breasts and swords at their sides. They wrote on golden slates with diamond pencils, and could recite just as well by heart as they could read from the book. Any one hearing them knew immediately that they were princes. Their sister Elise sat upon a little footstool made of looking-glass, and she had a picture book which had cost half the kingdom to buy.

Oh, these children were very, very happy! But thus it was not always to be.

Their father, who was king over all the land, married a wicked queen who was not at all kind to the poor children; they felt that on the very first day. There were great festivities at the castle, and the children played at visiting and having company. But instead of letting them have all the cakes and baked apples they could eat, as they were used to having, the queen gave them only some sand in a teacup, telling them they could make believe that it was something to eat.

The following week she sent little Elise into the country to live with some peasant people, and it did not take long to make the king believe so many bad things of the boys that he cared no more about them.

"You shall fly out into the world and look after yourselves," said the wicked queen; "fly away as great voiceless birds!"

But she could not make things as bad for them as she would have liked, for they turned into eleven beautiful wild swans. With strange cries they flew out of the palace window, away over the park and the forest.

It was still very early in the morning when they reached the peasants' cottage where their sister Elise lay asleep. They hovered over the roof, turning and twisting their long necks, and flapping their wings; but no one heard or saw them, and they had to fly on. They soared up toward the clouds and far out into the wide world. They flew away over a great dark forest, which stretched to the shore of the sea.

Poor little Elise stood in the peasants' room, playing with a green leaf, for she had no other toys. She made a little hole in the leaf and looked through it at the sun, and it seemed to her as if she saw her brothers' bright eyes. And every time the warm sunbeams shone upon her cheek, it reminded her of their kisses.

The days went by, one just like the other. When the wind blew through the hedges outside the house, it whispered to the roses, "Who could be more beautiful than you?" The roses shook their heads and answered, "Elise!" And when the old woman sat in the doorway of a Sunday reading in her psalm book, the wind turned the pages and said to the book, "Who could be more devout than you?" "Elise!" answered

the book. And both the roses and the book of psalms spoke the exact truth.

When she was fifteen Elise had to go back home, but when the queen saw how pretty she was, she was filled with anger and hatred toward her. She would willingly have turned her into a wild swan, too, like her brothers, but she did not dare do it at once, for the king wanted to see his daughter.

In the early morning the queen always went to her bath, which was built of marble and adorned with soft cushions and beautiful carpets.

There she took three toads, kissed them, and said to the first, "Sit upon Elise's head when she comes to bathe, that she may become stupid and sluggish like you." "Sit on her forehead," she said to the second, "that she may become homely like you, so that her father won't know her!" "Rest near her heart," she whispered to the third. "Let an evil spirit come over her, that will make her suffer." Then she put the toads into the clear water, which immediately took on a tinge of green. She called Elise, undressed her, and made her go into the bath. As she dipped under, one of the toads got into her hair, another on her forehead, and the third on her breast, but Elise seemed not to notice them at all. When she stood up three scarlet poppies floated on the water; had the creatures not been made poisonous from having been kissed by the sorceress, they would have been changed into crimson roses. None the less, flowers they became from merely having rested a moment on the good girl's head and near her heart. She was too pure and innocent for the enchantment to have any power over her.

When the wicked queen saw this, she rubbed walnut juice on Elise's skin, so that she became quite brown. Then she smeared her face with some evil-smelling

ointment, and tangled up her beautiful hair; it would have been quite impossible to recognize the pretty Elise.

When her father saw her he was quite horrified and said that she could not be his daughter. Nobody would have anything to say to her, except the watch dog, and the swallows, but they were poor animals whose opinion went for nothing.

Poor Elise wept, and thought of her eleven brothers, who were all far away. She crept sadly out of the palace and wandered all day over fields and marshes, into the great forest. She did not know in the least where she was going but she felt very sad, and longed for her brothers. No doubt, they too, like herself, had been driven out into the world; and she made up her mind to seek and find them.

She had been in the wood only a short while when night fell. She had quite lost her way; so she said her evening prayer, lay down on the soft moss, and leaned her head against a little stump. It was very still and the air was mild, and round about in the grass and on the moss, hundreds of glowworms shone like green fire. When she touched one of the branches above her gently, the glowing insects fell down to her like a shower of stars. All night long she dreamed about her brothers. Again they were children playing together; they wrote upon golden slates with diamond pencils and looked at the wonderful picture book that had cost half a kingdom. But they no longer wrote just lines and circles on their slates as they used to do; no, they wrote down all their bravest deeds, and everything that they had seen and experienced. In the picture book everything was alive—the birds sang, and the people walked out of the book and spoke to Elise and her brothers. But when she turned the page, they immediately

skipped back into their places so that there should be no confusion among the pictures.

When she woke the sun was already high. It is true she could not see it, for the lofty forest trees spread their branches thick and close, but beyond, the sunbeams played like a shimmering veil of gold. A fragrance of grass and growing things was in the air, and the birds were almost ready to perch upon her shoulders. She could hear the splashing of water, for nearby were many bubbling springs, which all flowed out into a pool with the loveliest sandy bottom. It was surrounded with thick bushes, but at one place the deer had made an opening, and there Elise passed through to the water's edge. It was so clear that, had not the branches moved in the breeze, she would have believed they were painted on the bottom, so plainly was every leaf reflected, those through which the sun shone as well as those in the shadow.

When she saw her own face in the water she was quite frightened, so brown and ugly was it; but when she wet her little hand and rubbed her eyes and forehead, her skin gleamed white again. Then she took off all her clothes and went into the fresh, clear water. A lovelier royal child than she could not have been found in all the world.

When she had dressed again, and braided her long hair, she went to one of the sparkling springs and drank out of the hollow of her hand. Then she wandered farther into the forest, though whither she did not know. She thought of her brothers, and she thought of a merciful God who would not forsake her. He had made the wild apples to grow to feed the hungry. He showed her one of these trees, the branches of which were bending low beneath their weight of fruit. Here she made her midday meal. Then she placed supports

under the heavy branches and walked on into the thickest part of the forest. It was so quiet that she heard her own footsteps; she heard every little withered leaf which bent under her feet. Not a bird was to be seen, not a ray of sunlight could make its way through the close, leafy branches. The tall trunks stood so near together that when she looked straight before her it seemed as if fences of heavy beams surrounded her on every side. Here was a solitude such as she had never known before.

That night was very, very dark; not a single little glowworm sparkled in the moss, and very sadly Elise lay down to sleep. Then it seemed to her as if the branches above her parted and our Lord looked down upon her with His loving eyes, and little angels peeped out from above His head and under His arms.

When she woke in the morning she was not sure whether she had dreamed this, or whether it had really happened.

She began to walk, and after having gone a few steps met an old woman with a basketful of berries, some of which she gave the girl. Elise asked if she had seen eleven princes ride through the wood.

"No," said the old woman, "but yesterday I saw eleven wild swans, with golden crowns on their heads, swimming down the stream not far away."

She led Elise a little farther on, to a slope, at the foot of which flowed a winding stream. The trees on either bank stretched their leafy branches over the stream toward one another, and wherever, from their natural growth, they could not reach one another, they had torn their roots loose from the ground, and leaned out over the water with closely interlacing branches.

Elise said good-by to the old woman, and walked

along by the river till it flowed out on the great open shore of the sea.

The beautiful sea lay before the maiden; but not a single sail was to be seen on it, not a single boat. How was she ever to get any farther? She looked at the numberless little pebbles on the beach; they had all been worn smooth and round by the waves. Glass, iron, stone, whatever had been washed up, had been given its form by the water, which yet was much softer than her fine little hand.

"It keeps on rolling tirelessly, and everything rough and hard it finally makes smooth and round. I will be just as untiring! Thank you for your lesson, you clear, rolling waves! Some time, so my heart tells me, you will bear me to my beloved brothers!"

With the seaweed washed up on the shore lay eleven white swans' feathers; she picked them up and tied them together. Drops of water lay on them, but whether these were dew or tears no one could have told. It was very lonely there by the shore. But the little maid did not feel it, for the sea presented endless changes—more in the course of a few hours than an inland fresh-water lake could show in a whole year. If a big black cloud came up, it seemed as if the sea wanted to say, "I, too, can look black"; and then the wind blew and the waves showed their white crests. But if the clouds shone red, and the wind slept, then the sea looked like a rose leaf. Now it was green, now white, but no matter how still it lay, there was always a gentle motion at the shore, where the water rose and fell gently like the breast of a sleeping child.

When the sun was about to sink, Elise saw eleven wild swans, with golden crowns on their heads, flying toward the shore. Swaying they flew, one behind the other. The line looked like a long white ribbon. Then

Elise climbed up the bank and hid behind a bush; the swans settled close by her and flapped their great white wings.

As soon as the sun sank beneath the water, the swans' feathers suddenly disappeared, and there stood eleven handsome princes, Elise's brothers. She gave a loud cry, for though they had altered greatly, she knew it was they—she felt that it must be they and no others; and into their arms she sprang, calling them by name. They were too happy for words when they recognized their little sister who had grown so tall and beautiful. They laughed and cried, and soon had told each other about how cruel their stepmother had been toward them all.

"We brothers," said the eldest, "fly about like wild swans, as long as the sun is above the horizon. When it goes down we regain our human forms. So at sundown we must always be careful to have a place to alight, for should we happen to be flying up among the clouds when the sun goes down, we should fall, in our human forms, to the depths below. We do not live here; there is another land, just as beautiful as this, beyond the sea; but the way to it is very long and we have to cross the mighty ocean to reach it. There is no island on our way where we can spend the night; only one solitary little cliff juts up out of the water midway. It is but just large enough for us to rest upon, side by side, and if there is a heavy sea the water dashes over us; yet we thank God for it. There we stay over night in our human forms, and without it we could never visit our beloved fatherland, for our flight takes two of the longest days in the year. But once a year may we visit the home of our fathers, and we dare stay here for only eleven days. We fly about over the great forest, whence we can catch a glimpse of the palace

where we were born and where our father lives, and beyond it the high tower of the church where our mother lies buried. Here we feel as if the trees and bushes were related to us; here the wild horses gallop over the moors, as we used to see them in our childhood. Here the charcoal burners sing the old songs we used to dance to when we were children. This is our fatherland and hither we are drawn, and here we have found you, you dear little sister! We may stay here two days longer, and then we must fly away across the ocean, to a lovely country, indeed, but not our fatherland! How can we ever take you with us? We have neither ship nor boat!"

"How can I save you?" said their sister, and they went on talking to each other, nearly the whole night through, sleeping for a few hours only.

Elise was awakened in the morning by the rustling of the swans' wings above her; her brothers were again transformed, and flew round in great circles, till she lost sight of them in the distance. But one of them, the youngest, stayed behind. The swan laid his head in her lap, and she stroked its white wings. All day they remained together. Toward evening the others returned, and as soon as the sun went down there they stood in their natural forms.

"To-morrow we must fly away, and dare not come back for a whole year, but we cannot leave you like this! Have you the courage to go with us? My arm is strong enough to carry you through the forest, and surely all our wings together ought to be strong enough to bear you across the ocean."

"Yes, yes, take me with you!" said Elise.

They spent the whole evening weaving a kind of net out of the elastic bark of the willow and the tough rushes; they made it large and strong. Elise lay down

ELSIE WAS AWAKENED BY THE RUSTLING
OF THE SWANS' WINGS

upon it, and when the sun rose and the brothers turned to swans again, they took hold of the net with their bills and flew high up toward the clouds with their precious sister, who was still fast asleep. The sunbeams fell right in her face, so one of the swans flew over her head that his broad wings might shield her.

They were far from land when Elise awoke; she thought she must still be dreaming, it seemed so strange to be carried through the air high over the ocean. By her side lay a branch of lovely ripe berries, and a number of sweet-tasting nuts, which her youngest brother had gathered for her, and she smiled at him gratefully. She knew it was he who flew above her, shading her from the sun.

They were up so high that the first ship they saw looked like a white sea gull floating on the water. A great cloud came up behind them like a mountain, and Elise saw her own shadow on it, and that of the eleven swans flying there like giants in size. It was a grander picture than she had ever seen before, but as the sun rose higher, and the cloud fell farther behind, the swaying shadow picture disappeared.

They flew on and on all day like an arrow whizzing through the air, but they went more slowly than usual, for now they had their sister to carry. Bad weather came, and night was drawing on. With terror in her heart, Elise saw the sun sinking, and still the solitary rock was nowhere to be seen. The swans seemed to be taking stronger strokes than ever; alas! she was the cause of their not being able to travel faster; as soon as the sun went down they would become men, fall headlong into the sea, and drown. She prayed to God from her inmost heart, but still she could not see the rock. The black clouds drew nearer and nearer, and strong gusts of wind foretold a storm. The clouds looked like

a great, threatening, leaden wave rushing ever forward, while the lightning flashed ceaselessly.

The sun was now right at the edge of the sea. Elise's heart quaked. Then the swans shot downward so suddenly that she thought she was falling; then they hovered again. Half of the sun was below the horizon, and now for the first time she saw the little rock below her. It looked no bigger than the head of a seal sticking out of the water. The sun sank quickly, now it was no bigger than a star; then her foot touched solid earth, and the sun went out like the last spark in a bit of burning paper; she saw her brothers stand arm in arm around her, and there was only just room enough for them and her. The waves beat against the rock, and dashed over them like a shower of drenching rain. The heavens gleamed with one continuous flame, and peal on peal rolled the thunder. But sister and brothers held each other's hands and sang a psalm which gave them courage and comfort.

At dawn the air was clear and still. As soon as the sun rose, the swans flew off with Elise, away from the island. The sea still ran high, and, when they were flying in the air, the white foam on the dark green ocean looked like millions of swans floating on the water.

When the sun rose higher, Elise saw before her, half floating in the air, a mountain country with great masses of shining ice on the heights. And in the midst lay a palace that seemed miles in length, with steep colonnades and porticoes built one above the other. Below swayed forests of palm trees and gorgeous blossoms as big as mill wheels. She asked if it was the land to which she was going, but the swans shook their heads, because what she saw was a mirage, the beautiful and ever changing palace of Fata Morgana. No mortal dared enter there. Elise gazed at it, and, as she gazed,

palace, forests, and mountains fell away, and in their place stood twenty proud churches, all alike, with high towers and pointed windows. She seemed to hear the notes of the organ, but it was the ocean she heard. Now she was close to the churches, and lo! they had changed to a great fleet sailing away below her; she looked down and still more transformations kept passing before her gaze until the real land to which she was bound rose before her, with its beautiful blue mountains covered with forests of cedar, and its cities and palaces. Long before the sun went down, she sat among the hills in front of a large cave covered with soft green creepers, which looked like embroidered carpets and tapestry.

"Now we shall see what you will dream here to-night," said the youngest brother, as he showed her the cave chamber where she was to sleep.

"Would that I might dream how to save you," she said, and this thought filled her mind completely. She prayed earnestly to God for His help, and even in her sleep she continued her prayer. Then it seemed to her that she was flying high in the air to Fata Morgana's cloud castle, and that the fairy came to meet her. She was wonderfully charming and brilliant, and yet she resembled closely the woman who gave her the berries in the wood and told her about the swans with the golden crowns.

"Your brothers can be saved," she said, "but have you courage and endurance? The sea is indeed softer than your little hands, and yet it wears away the hardest stones, but it does not feel the pain your fingers would feel. It has no heart, and does not suffer the sorrow and anguish you must endure. Do you see this stinging nettle I hold in my hand? Many of its kind grow round the cave where you sleep; only those and

the ones which grow on the graves in the churchyards may be used. Remember it well! You must pluck them, though they burn and blister your hands. Crush the nettles with your feet and you will have flax, and of this you must weave eleven coats of mail, with long sleeves. Throw these over the eleven wild swans and the charm is broken! But remember that from the moment you begin this work until it is finished, even though years pass meanwhile, you must not speak. The first word you say will go like a death-dealing dagger straight to your brothers' hearts. Their lives hang on your tongue. Mark well all I have told you!"

At the same moment she touched the girl's hand with the nettle; it felt like burning fire and Elise awoke. It was bright daylight, and close to where she had slept lay a nettle like that she had seen in her dream. She fell upon her knees with thanks to God, and left the cave to begin her work.

She seized the odious nettles with her delicate fingers, and they burned her like fire; great blisters rose on her hands and arms, but she suffered gladly could she thus deliver her beloved brothers. With her bare feet she crushed every nettle, and twisted the green flax.

The brothers came back at sunset, and they were very much alarmed at finding Elise so silent; they thought it was some new witchcraft exercised by their evil stepmother. But when they saw her hands, they understood what she was doing for their sakes; the youngest brother wept, and wherever his tears fell, she felt no more pain, and the burning blisters disappeared.

She spent the whole night at her work, for she could not rest till she had delivered her dear brothers. All the following day while the swans were away she sat solitary, but never had the time flown so quickly. One

coat of mail was finished and now she began the next. Then a hunting horn sounded among the mountains; she was much frightened, the sound came nearer, and she heard dogs barking. In terror she rushed into the cave, tied the flax she had collected and woven into a bundle, and seated herself upon it.

At that moment a big dog bounded forward from the thicket, and another and another. They barked loudly, ran back and then forward again. In a few minutes all the huntsmen were standing outside the cave, and the handsomest of them was the king of the country. He stepped up to Elise, and never had he seen a more beautiful girl.

"How came you here, you beautiful child?" he asked.

Elise shook her head, for she dared not speak; the salvation and the lives of her brothers depended upon it. She hid her hands under her apron, so that the king should not see what she had to suffer.

"Come with me!" he said. "You cannot stay here! If you are as good as you are beautiful, I will dress you in silks and velvets and put a golden crown upon your head, and you shall live with me and have your home in my richest palace!" Then he lifted her up on his horse; she wept and wrung her hands, but the king said, "I only wish your happiness; some day you will thank me for what I am doing!" Then he dashed away among the mountains, holding her before him on his horse, and all the huntsmen followed.

As the sun went down, the magnificent royal city with churches and domes lay before them, and the king led her into the palace, where great fountains played in lofty marble halls, and where walls and ceilings glowed with paintings; but she had no eyes for all that, she only wept and sorrowed; passively she allowed the women to dress her in royal robes, to braid pearls into her hair, and to draw gloves over the blistered fingers.

She was so dazzling in her loveliness as she stood there in all her pretty clothes that the courtiers bowed still lower before her, and the king wooed her for his bride, though the archbishop shook his head, and whispered that he feared the beautiful wood maiden must be a witch who dazzled their eyes and charmed the king's heart.

But the king did not listen; he ordered the music to play, the richest food to be brought, and the loveliest girls to dance before her. She was led through fragrant gardens into gorgeous apartments, but not a smile came to her lips, or shone forth in her eyes; sorrow sat there like an eternal heritage. Then the

king opened the door of a little chamber close by the room where she was to sleep. It was adorned with costly green carpets, and looked exactly like the cave where she had lived. On the floor lay the bundle of flax she had spun from the nettles, and from the ceiling hung the shirt of mail that had been finished. One of the huntsmen had brought all these things away as curiosities.

"Here you may dream that you are back in your former home!" said the king. "Here is the work upon which you were engaged; now, in the midst of your splendor, it will amuse you to recall those times."

When Elise saw all these things so dear to her heart, a smile for the first time played upon her lips, and the blood came back to her cheeks. She thought of the deliverance of her brothers, and she kissed the king's hand; he pressed her to his heart, and ordered that all the church bells ring the marriage peals. The lovely, voiceless girl from the woods was to be queen of the land.

The archbishop whispered evil words into the ear of the king, but they did not reach his heart. The wedding was to take place, and the archbishop himself had to put the crown upon the bride's head. In his evil ill will he pressed the narrow circlet tightly down upon her forehead so that it hurt her. But a heavier circlet lay about her heart, her grief for her brothers, and she did not feel the physical pain. Her lips were sealed, for a single word from her would cost her brothers their lives, but her eyes were full of great love for the good and handsome king who did everything he could to make her happy. Every day she grew more and more attached to him, and longed to confide in him, to tell him her sufferings; but dumb she must remain, and in silence complete her task. So at night she stole away

from his side into the little chamber which was made to resemble the cave, and here she knitted, finishing one shirt after another. When she came to the seventh, she had no more flax; she knew that the nettles she was to use grew in the churchyard. But she had to pluck them herself. How was she to get there?

"Oh, what is the pain of my fingers compared with the anguish of my heart?" she thought. "I must venture it, and the good God will not desert me!" With as much terror in her heart as if she were doing an evil deed, she stole down, one moonlight night, into the garden, and between the long rows of trees out into the silent streets to the churchyard. There she saw, sitting on one of the largest gravestones, a group of hideous ghouls, who took off their tattered garments, as if they were about to bathe. Then they dug down into the freshly made graves, with their long, skinny fingers, took out the bodies, and devoured them. Elise had to pass close by them, and they fixed their evil eyes upon her; but she said a prayer as she passed, picked the stinging nettles, and hurried back to the palace with them.

Only one person had seen her, and that was the archbishop, who was up while others slept. Surely, now his opinion that all was not as it should be with the queen was justified; she was a witch, and so she had charmed the king and all the people.

He told the king in the confessional what he had seen and what he feared, and when those hard words passed his lips, the sculptured saints shook their heads as if to say: "It is not so; Elise is innocent." But the archbishop explained it differently, and said that they shook their heads at her sin. Two great tears rolled down the king's cheeks, and he went home with doubt in his heart. He pretended to sleep at night, but no

quiet sleep came to his eyes. He perceived how Elise got up every night and went to her little private room. Day by day his face grew darker. Elise saw it but could not imagine the cause of it. It alarmed her, and what was she not already suffering in her heart for the sake of her brothers! Her salt tears ran down upon the royal velvet and purple, where they lay like sparkling diamonds; and all who saw the rich splendor wished to be queen.

She had, however, almost reached the end of her labors; only one shirt of mail was wanting. But again she had no more flax and not a single nettle. Once more, for the last time, she must go to the churchyard to pluck a few handfuls. She thought with dread of the solitary walk and the horrible ghouls; but her will was as strong as her trust in God.

Elise went, but the king and the archbishop followed her. They saw her disappear within the grated gateway of the churchyard, and when they approached they saw the ghouls sitting on the gravestone as Elise had seen them; and the king turned away, for he thought among them her whose head that very evening had rested on his breast.

"The people must judge her," he said. And the people judged that she should be burned in the glowing flames!

She was led away from her beautiful royal apartments to a dark, damp dungeon, where the wind whistled through the grated windows. Instead of velvet and silk they gave her the bundle of nettles she had gathered; on that she could lay her head. The hard, burning shirts of mail she had knitted were to be her covering. But they could have given her nothing more precious. She set to work again and prayed to God. Outside her prison the street boys sang derisive songs

about her, and not a soul comforted her with a kind word.

Toward evening she heard the rustle of swans' wings close to the bars of her window. It was her youngest brother, who had at last found her. He sobbed aloud with joy although he knew that the coming night might be her last; but then, too, her work was now almost done and her brothers were there.

The archbishop came to spend the last hour with her as he had promised the king. But she shook her head at him, and by looks and gestures begged him to leave her. That night she had to finish her work, or else all would be wasted—all—pain, tears, and sleepless nights. The archbishop went away with bitter words against her, but poor Elise knew that she was innocent, and she went on with her work.

The little mice ran about the floor bringing nettles to her feet, so as to give what help they could, and a thrush sat at the grating of the window, where he sang all night as merrily as he could to keep up her courage.

Dawn was just breaking and the sun would not rise for another hour, when the eleven brothers stood at the gate of the palace and asked to be taken to the king. This could not be done, was the answer, for it was still night; the king was asleep and no one dared wake him. They entreated, they threatened, the watch came, and even the king himself stepped out and asked what it meant; but just then the sun rose, and no more brothers were to be seen, only eleven wild swans flying away over the palace.

The whole populace streamed out of the town gates to see the witch burned. A miserable horse drew the cart in which Elise was seated. They had put upon her a garment of coarse sackcloth, and all her wonderful long hair hung loose about her beautiful head.

Her cheeks were deathly pale, and her lips moved softly, while her fingers unceasingly twisted the green flax. Even on the way to her death she did not abandon her unfinished work. Ten shirts lay completed at her feet and she was knitting the eleventh.

The populace scoffed at her. "See how the witch mutters. No psalm book has she in her hands; no, there she sits with her loathsome sorcery. Tear it away from her, into a thousand pieces!"

The crowd pressed around her to destroy her work, but just then eleven white swans came flying and perched on the cart around her and flapped their great wings. The crowd gave way before them in terror.

"It is a sign from Heaven! She must be innocent!" they whispered, but they dared not say it aloud.

The executioners seized her by the hand, but she hastily threw the eleven shirts over the swans, and there stood eleven handsome princes; but the youngest had a swan's wing in place of an arm, for one sleeve was wanting to his shirt of mail; she had not had time to finish it.

"Now I may speak! I am innocent!"

The people who saw what had happened bowed down before her as if she had been a saint, but she sank lifeless in her brothers' arms; so great had been the strain, the terror, and the suffering she had endured.

"Yes, innocent she is, indeed," said the eldest brother, and he told them all that had happened.

While he spoke a wonderful fragrance, as of millions of roses, spread around. Every faggot around the stake had taken root and shot out branches, and a great, high hedge of red roses had grown up. At the very top was one pure white flower, shining like a star. This the king broke off and placed on Elise's breast, and she woke with joy and peace in her heart.

All the church bells began to ring of their own accord, singing birds flocked around them, and such a bridal procession passed back to the palace as no king had ever seen before!

From *Andersen's Fairy Tales* (Windemere Edition) translated by Valdemar Paulsen. Reprinted by permission of Rand, McNally and Company, Chicago.

THE WISE MEN OF GOTHAM

By Clifton Johnson

The Kettle That Would Not Walk

ONE day a Gotham man was getting ready to go to market, and his wife said to him, "Husband, we need a new iron kettle for the fireplace. Don't fail to buy one."

So the man bought a kettle at Nottingham, and toward evening he took it on his arm and started for home. But the kettle was heavy, and at length his arm grew tired with carrying it and he set it down. While he was resting he noticed that the kettle had three legs. "What a pity I did not see those legs before!" cried the man. "Here you have three legs and I have but two, and yet I have been carrying you. 'Twere fairer that you had carried me. Well, you shall take me the rest of the way, at least."

Then he seated himself in the kettle and said, "Now, go on; I am all ready"; but the kettle stood stock-still on its three legs and would not move.

"Ah!" said the man, "you are stubborn, are you? You want me to keep on carrying you, I suppose; but I shall not. I will tell you the way and you

can stay where you are until you get ready to follow me."

So he told the kettle where he lived and how to get there, and then off the man went. When he reached home his wife asked him where the kettle was.

"Oh, it will be along in good time," he replied.

"And what do you mean by that?" said she.

"Why," said he, "the kettle I bought has three legs, and was better able to walk here from Nottingham market than I who have but two legs. Yet I never noticed it had legs until I was nearly here. Then I told it to walk the rest of the way itself, for I would carry it no farther."

"Where did you leave it?" asked the wife.

"You need not be anxious," responded the man. "I told it the way, and it will be along in good time, as I said before."

"And where did you leave it?" again asked the wife.

"At Gotham bridge," he replied.

She was not so sure about its coming as he was and she hurried off to get it, and when she brought it home the man said, "I am glad you have it safe, wife, for I have been thinking while you were gone that it might have taken a notion to walk back to Nottingham if we had left it alone there in the road much longer."

The Lost Legs

Several men of Gotham once sat down on the ground in a circle, and when they wanted to get up their legs were so intermingled that no one could make out which were his.

"Alas!" said they, "what a pity that we sat down thus. We shall never again be able to rise and walk —that is quite plain."

So they remained sitting there very sorrowful and

quiet until they saw a traveler passing. They called to him and asked if he could tell them how they might find their legs. The traveler took his cane and pointed to each man his feet. "Now," said he, "you know where your feet are, all you need do is to stand on them."

But his explanations only confused the men of Gotham the more. "It is of no use," said they. "However, we thank you, sir, for your good intentions."

"Oh, well," said the traveler, "I haven't given up yet. I'll try one more plan."

Then he struck one of the men smartly on the legs with his cane, and that man discovered which legs were his in no time and scrambled away. The traveler served another man in like manner, and a third, and so on till every man tumbled out of the heap and got on his feet.

"How remarkable!" said one of them, "that with the rap of a stick we should discover our legs so quickly when with all our thinking we could not have determined which were which had we sat there a hundred years."

THE LITTLE HORSE AND ITS KIND MASTER

There was once a man of Gotham, who started for market with two bushels of wheat, and the wheat was in a bag laid across his horse's back, and the man sat just behind the bag. But he had not gone far when another man of Gotham called to him from a wayside field and said, "Your horse is small, neighbor, for so much of a load. Why do you not walk and lead it?"

"That is what I would do," replied the first man; "but my foot is lame and I cannot walk very well."

"Then if you must ride," said the other, "I think you might take the bag of wheat on your shoulder so the horse would not have to carry that, too."

"Why, so I could," said the first man; and he hoisted the bag of wheat to his shoulder and there he carried it all the way to market.

"Ah," said he, when he reached his destination, "how my little horse does pant and sweat! I did well to share the work with it, for I see clearly that the horse has had burden enough carrying me without having also to carry this heavy bag of wheat."

THE CRANE IN THE WHEAT FIELDS

Once, in the summer, when the wheat had grown high, a crane was often seen in the fields belonging to the Gotham townsmen, walking up and down in the grain patches to catch frogs. This troubled the men of Gotham greatly. "See how big he is," said one, "and look at the legs of him. He is treading down a vast deal of grain, to be sure."

"We must drive the creature away, or we shall have no harvest," said another.

"Very true," said still another, "and the quicker the better. Let us appoint Tom Thacker, the shepherd, for the job. He is used to much walking and the work would suit him well."

So Tom Thacker, the shepherd, was appointed to go into the fields and chase the bird out. But as he went in after the crane his neighbors noticed that his feet were very broad and large, and though he scared off the bird, he at the same time trampled down a great deal of wheat.

"That will never do," said one of the townsmen, and the men of Gotham puzzled their brains for some better method.

At last one of them said, "The thing to do is this—some of us must carry the shepherd when he goes

into the grain again, so that he shall not tread it down."

"Yes, yes," cried the others, "that is the proper thing to do, and why did we not think of that before, I wonder?"

Then they took a stout fence gate off its hinges, had the shepherd sit down on it, and eight men lifted the gate on their shoulders and carried it through the fields of wheat, where the crane was in the habit of resorting, that the shepherd might scare the bird away.

"The shepherd will not trample down any more of our grain with his big feet now," said the men of Gotham.

THE GOTHAM MEN AND THE CUCKOO

The men of Gotham thought that the cuckoos were the finest songsters of all the birds. "The only thing I do not like about the cuckoos," said one man, "is that they do not sing all the year through. They stay with us only a few months in the spring and summer, and then they fly away."

"Well," said another man, "why not catch one of the birds and keep it with us always?"

This plan was pleasing to the men of Gotham and they said, "Yes, we will catch a cuckoo and we will fix a place for it near the middle of the village, so that we can all hear it sing every day."

They went to work at once and in a corner of a field built a stout paling fence more than six feet high and filled in all the crevices with brush and willow twigs. "No bird can get through that fence," said they when it was finished.

Then they caught a cuckoo and put it inside of the fence, and they said to the cuckoo, "You must sing there all through the year, or you shall have neither meat to eat nor water to drink."

But the cuckoo as soon as it was set free inside of the fence flew away.

"A vengeance on the bird!" exclaimed the men of Gotham. "We did not make our fence high enough."

The Hiding of the Church Bell

The men of Gotham were once greatly scared by a report that enemies were about to invade their country. They were anxious to save as much as they could from falling into the hands of their invaders; and first of all they decided to save their church bell, which they prized more than anything else. After a great deal of trouble they succeeded in getting it down out of the church steeple; but what to do with it then was far from easy to determine.

"Where shall we hide it so the enemy cannot find it?" asked one of another.

At last some one said, "Let us sink it in the deepest part of our pond."

"Agreed!" said his fellows, and they dragged the

bell down to the shore of the pond and got it aboard a boat.

Then they rowed out to the middle of the pond and hoisted the bell overboard. After it had disappeared the worthy citizens of Gotham began to think they had

been hasty. "The bell is now truly safe from the enemy," said they; "but how are we to find it when the enemy has left us?"

One of them, who was wiser than the rest, sprang up and cried, "That is easy enough. All we have to do is to cut a mark where we dropped it in!"

He snatched a knife from his pocket and cut a deep notch in the side of the boat where the bell had been thrown overboard. "It was right here that we heaved the bell out," said he.

Then the men of Gotham rowed back to the shore, fully assured that they would be able to find their bell by the mark on the side of the boat.

This group of six nonsense stories appeared in *The Oak Tree Fairy Book,* a collection of fifty-four familiar stories retold by Mr. Johnson. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown and Company, Boston.

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

By Mme. de Villeneuve

ONCE upon a time, in a very far-off country, there lived a merchant who had been so fortunate in all his undertakings that he was enormously rich. As he had, however, six sons and six daughters, he found that his great wealth was none too much to satisfy their extravagant fancies.

But one day a most unexpected misfortune befell them. Their house caught fire and was speedily burned to the ground, with all the splendid furniture, the books, pictures, gold, silver, and precious goods it contained; and this was only the beginning of their troubles. Their father, who had until this moment prospered in all ways, suddenly lost every ship he had upon the sea, either by dint of pirates, shipwreck, or fire. Then he heard that his clerks in distant countries, whom he trusted entirely, had proved unfaithful; and at last from great wealth he fell into the direst poverty.

All that he had left was a little house in a desolate place at least a hundred leagues from the town in which he had lived, and to this he was forced to retreat with his children, who were in despair at the idea of leading such a different life. Indeed, the daughters at first hoped that their friends, who had been so numerous while they were rich, would insist on their staying in their houses now they no longer possessed one. But they soon found that they were left alone, and that their former friends even attributed their misfortunes to their own extravagance, and showed no intention of offering

them any help. So nothing was left for them but to take their departure to the cottage, which stood in the midst of a dark forest, and seemed to be the most dismal place upon the face of the earth. As they were too poor to have any servants, the girls had to work hard, like peasants, and the sons, for their part, cultivated the fields to earn their living. Roughly clothed, and living in the simplest way, the girls regretted unceasingly the luxuries and amusements of their former life; only the youngest tried to be brave and cheerful. She had been as sad as anyone when misfortune first overtook her father, but, soon recovering her natural gayety, she set to work to make the best of things, to amuse her father and brothers as well as she could, and to try to persuade her sisters to join her in dancing and singing.

But they would do nothing of the sort, and, since she was not as doleful as themselves, they declared that this miserable life was all she was fit for. But she was really far prettier and cleverer than they were; indeed, she was so lovely that she was always called Beauty. After two years, when they were all beginning to get used to their new life, something happened to disturb their tranquillity. Their father received the news that one of the ships, which he had believed to be lost, had come safely into port with a rich cargo. All the sons and daughters at once thought that their poverty was at an end, and wanted to set out directly for the town; but their father, who was more prudent, begged them to wait a little, and, though it was harvest time, and he could ill be spared, determined to go himself first, to make inquiries. Only the youngest daughter had any doubt but that they would soon again be as rich as they were before, or at least rich enough to live comfortably in some town where they would find amusement and gay companions once more. So they all loaded their

father with commissions for jewels and dresses which it would have taken a fortune to buy; only Beauty, feeling sure that it was of no use, did not ask for anything. Her father, noticing her silence, said: "And what shall I bring for you, Beauty?"

"The only thing I wish for is to see you come home safely," she answered.

But this reply vexed her sisters, who fancied she was blaming them for having asked for such costly things. Her father, however, was pleased, but as he thought that at her age she certainly ought to like pretty presents, he told her to choose something.

"Well, dear father," she said, "as you insist upon it, I beg that you will bring me a rose. I have not seen one since we came here, and I love them so much."

So the merchant set out and reached the town as quickly as possible, but only to find that his former companions, believing him to be dead, had divided between them the goods which the ship had brought; and after six months of trouble and expense he found himself as poor as when he started, having been able to recover only just enough to pay the cost of his journey. To make matters worse, he was obliged to leave the town in the most terrible weather, so that by the time he was within a few leagues of his home he was almost exhausted with cold and fatigue. Though he knew it would take some hours to get through the forest, he was so anxious to be at his journey's end that he resolved to go on; but night overtook him, and the deep snow and bitter frost made it impossible for his horse to carry him any farther. Not a house was to be seen; the only shelter he could get was the hollow trunk of a great tree, and there he crouched all the night, which seemed to him the longest he had ever known. In spite of his weariness the howling of the wolves kept him

awake, and even when at last the day broke he was not much better off, for the falling snow had covered up every path, and he did not know which way to turn.

At length he made out some sort of track, and though at the beginning it was so rough and slippery that he fell down more than once, it presently became easier, and led him into an avenue of trees which ended in a splendid castle. It seemed to the merchant very strange that no snow had fallen in the avenue, which was entirely composed of orange trees, covered with flowers and fruit. When he reached the first court of the castle he saw before him a flight of agate steps, and went up them, and passed through several splendidly furnished rooms. The pleasant warmth of the air revived him, and he felt very hungry; but there seemed to be nobody in all this vast and splendid palace whom he could ask to give him something to eat. Deep silence reigned everywhere, and at last, tired of roaming through empty rooms and galleries, he stopped in a room smaller than the rest, where a clear fire was burning and a couch was drawn up cosily close to it. Thinking that this must be prepared for some one who was expected, he sat down to wait till he should come, and very soon fell into a sweet sleep.

When his extreme hunger wakened him after several hours, he was still alone; but a little table, upon which was a good dinner, had been drawn up close to him, and, as he had eaten nothing for twenty-four hours, he lost no time in beginning his meal, hoping that he might soon have an opportunity of thanking his considerate entertainer, whoever it might be. But no one appeared, and even after another long sleep, from which he awoke completely refreshed, there was no sign of anybody, though a fresh meal of dainty cakes and fruit was prepared upon the little table at his

elbow. Being naturally timid, the silence began to terrify him, and he resolved to search once more through all the rooms; but it was no use. Not even a servant was to be seen; there was no sign of life in the palace! He began to wonder what he should do, and to amuse himself by pretending that all the treasures he saw were his own, and considering how he would divide them among his children. Then he went down into the garden, and though it was winter everywhere else, here the sun shone, and the birds sang, and the flowers bloomed, and the air was soft and sweet. The merchant, in ecstasies with all he saw and heard, said to himself:

"All this must be meant for me. I will go this minute and bring my children to share all these delights."

In spite of being so cold and weary when he reached the castle, he had taken his horse to the stable and fed it. Now he thought he would saddle it for his homeward journey, and he turned down the path which led to the stable. This path had a hedge of roses on each side of it, and the merchant thought he had never seen or smelt such exquisite flowers. They reminded him of his promise to Beauty, and he stopped and had just gathered one to take to her when he was startled by a strange noise behind him. Turning round, he saw a frightful Beast, which seemed to be very angry and said, in a terrible voice:

"Who told you that you might gather my roses? Was it not enough that I allowed you to be in my palace and was kind to you? This is the way you show your gratitude, by stealing my flowers! But your insolence shall not go unpunished." The merchant, terrified by these furious words, dropped the fatal rose, and, throwing himself on his knees, cried: "Pardon me, noble sir.

I am truly grateful to you for your hospitality, which was so magnificent that I could not imagine that you would be offended by my taking such a little thing as a rose." But the Beast's anger was not lessened by this speech.

"You are very ready with excuses and flattery," he cried; "but that will not save you from the death you deserve."

"Alas!" thought the merchant, "if my daughter Beauty could only know what danger her rose has brought me into!"

And in despair he began to tell the Beast all his misfortunes, and the reason of his journey, not forgetting to mention Beauty's request.

"A king's ransom would hardly have procured all that my other daughters asked," he said; "but I thought that I might at least take Beauty her rose. I beg you to forgive me, for you see I meant no harm."

The Beast considered for a moment, and then he said, in a less furious tone.

"I will forgive you on one condition—that is, that you will give me one of your daughters."

"Ah!" cried the merchant, "if I were cruel enough to buy my own life at the expense of one of my children's, what excuse could I invent to bring her here?"

"No excuse would be necessary," answered the Beast. "If she comes at all she must come willingly. On no other condition will I have her. See if any one of them is courageous enough, and loves you well enough to come and save your life. You seem to be an honest man, so I will trust you to go home. I give you a month to see if either of your daughters will come back with you and stay here, to let you go free. If neither of them is willing, you must come alone, after bidding them good-by forever, for then you will belong to me.

And do not imagine that you can hide from me, for if you fail to keep your word I will come and fetch you!" added the Beast grimly.

The merchant accepted this proposal, though he did not really think any of his daughters would be persuaded to come. He promised to return at the time appointed, and then, anxious to escape from the presence of the Beast, he asked permission to set off at once. But the Beast answered that he could not go until the next day.

"Then you will find a horse ready for you," he said. "Now go and eat your supper, and await my orders."

The poor merchant, more dead than alive, went back to his room, where the most delicious supper was already served on the little table which was drawn up before a blazing fire. But he was too terrified to eat, and only tasted a few of the dishes, for fear the Beast should be angry if he did not obey his orders. When he had finished he heard a great noise in the next room, which he knew meant that the Beast was coming. As he could do nothing to escape his visit, the only thing that remained was to seem as little afraid as possible; so when the Beast appeared and asked roughly if he had supped well, the merchant answered humbly that he had, thanks to his host's kindness. Then the Beast warned him to remember their agreement, and to prepare his daughter exactly for what she had to expect.

"Do not get up to-morrow," he added, "until you see the sun and hear a golden bell ring. Then you will find your breakfast waiting for you here, and the horse you are to ride will be ready in the courtyard. He will also bring you back again when you come with your daughter a month hence. Farewell. Take a rose to Beauty, and remember your promise!"

The merchant was only too glad when the Beast went

away, and though he could not sleep for sadness, he lay down until the sun rose. Then, after a hasty breakfast, he went to gather Beauty's rose, and mounted his horse, which carried him off so swiftly that in an instant he had lost sight of the palace, and he was still wrapped in gloomy thoughts when it stopped before the door of the cottage.

His sons and daughters, who had been very uneasy at his long absence, rushed to meet him, eager to know the result of his journey, which, seeing him mounted upon a splendid horse and wrapped in a rich mantle, they supposed to be favorable. But he hid the truth from them at first, only saying sadly to Beauty as he gave her the rose:

"Here is what you asked me to bring you; you little know what it has cost."

But this excited their curiosity so greatly that presently he told them his adventures from beginning to end, and then they were all very unhappy. The girls lamented loudly over their lost hopes, and the sons declared that their father should not return to this terrible castle, and began to make plans for killing the Beast if it should come to fetch him. But he reminded them that he had promised to go back. Then the girls were very angry with Beauty, and said it was all her fault, and that if she had asked for something sensible this would never have happened, and complained bitterly that they should have to suffer for her folly.

Poor Beauty, much distressed, said to them:

"I have indeed caused this misfortune, but I assure you I did it innocently. Who could have guessed that to ask for a rose in the middle of summer would cause so much misery? But as I did the mischief it is only just that I should suffer for it. I will therefore go back with my father to keep his promise."

At first nobody would hear of this arrangement, and her father and brothers, who loved her dearly, declared that nothing should make them let her go; but Beauty was firm. As the time drew near she divided all her little possessions among her sisters, and said good-by to everything she loved, and when the fatal day came, she encouraged and cheered her father as they mounted together the horse which had brought him back. It seemed to fly rather than gallop, but so smoothly that Beauty was not frightened; indeed, she would have enjoyed the journey if she had not feared what might happen to her at the end of it. Her father still tried to persuade her to go back, but in vain. While they were talking the night fell, and then, to their great surprise, wonderful colored lights began to shine in all directions, and splendid fireworks blazed out before them; all the forest was illuminated by them, and even felt pleasantly warm, though it had been bitterly cold before. This lasted until they reached the avenue of orange trees, where were statues holding flaming torches, and when they got nearer to the palace they saw that it was illuminated from the roof to the ground, and music sounded softly from the courtyard. "The Beast must be very hungry," said Beauty, trying to laugh, "if he makes all this rejoicing over the arrival of his prey."

But, in spite of her anxiety, she could not help admiring all the wonderful things she saw.

The horse stopped at the foot of the flight of steps to the terrace, and when they had dismounted her father led her to the little room he had been in before, where they found a splendid fire burning, and the table daintily spread with a delicious supper.

The merchant knew that this was meant for them, and Beauty, who was rather less frightened now that

she had passed through so many rooms and seen nothing of the Beast, was quite willing to begin, for her long ride had made her very hungry. But they had hardly finished their meal when the noise of the Beast's footsteps was heard approaching, and Beauty clung to her father in terror, which became all the greater when she saw how frightened he was. But when the Beast really appeared, though she trembled at the sight of him, she made a great effort to hide her horror and saluted him respectfully.

This evidently pleased the Beast. After looking at her he said, in a tone that might have struck terror into the boldest heart, though he did not seem to be angry:

"Good-evening, old man. Good-evening, Beauty."

The merchant was too terrified to reply, but Beauty answered sweetly:

"Good-evening, Beast."

"Have you come willingly?" asked the Beast. "Will you be content to stay here when your father goes away?"

Beauty answered bravely that she was quite prepared to stay.

"I am pleased with you," said the Beast. "As you have come of your own accord, you may stay. As for you, old man," he added, turning to the merchant, "at sunrise to-morrow you will take your departure. When the bell rings get up quickly and eat your breakfast, and you will find the same horse waiting to take you home; but remember that you must never expect to see my palace again."

Then turning to Beauty, he said:

"Take your father into the next room, and help him to choose everything you think your brothers and sisters would like to have. You will find two traveling trunks there; fill them as full as you can. It is only just that

you should send them something very precious as a remembrance of yourself."

Then he went away, after saying, , "Good-by Beauty; good-by, old man"; and though Beauty was beginning to think with great dismay of her father's departure, she was afraid to disobey the Beast's orders; and they went into the next room, which had shelves and cupboards all round it. They were greatly surprised at the riches it contained. There were splendid dresses fit for a queen, with all the ornaments that were to be worn with them; and when Beauty opened the cupboards she was quite dazzled by the gorgeous jewels that lay in heaps upon every shelf. After choosing a vast quantity, which she divided among her sisters—for she had made a heap of the wonderful dresses for each of them—she opened the last chest, which was full of gold.

"I think, father," she said, "that, as the gold will be more useful to you, we had better take out the other things again, and fill the trunks with it." So they did this; but the more they put in, the more room there seemed to be, and at last they put back all the jewels and dresses they had taken out, and Beauty even added as many more of the jewels as she could carry at once; and then the trunks were not too full, but they were so heavy that an elephant could not have carried them!

"The Beast was mocking us," cried the merchant; "he must have pretended to give us all these things, knowing that I could not carry them away."

"Let us wait and see," answered Beauty. "I cannot believe that he meant to deceive us. All we can do is to fasten them up and leave them ready."

So they did this and returned to the little room where, to their astonishment, they found breakfast ready. The merchant ate his with a good appetite, as the Beast's

generosity made him believe that he might perhaps venture to come back soon and see Beauty. But she felt sure that her father was leaving her forever, so she was very sad when the bell rang sharply for the second time, and warned them that the time had come for them to part. They went down into the courtyard, where two horses were waiting, one loaded with the two trunks, the other for him to ride. They were pawing the ground in their impatience to start, and the merchant was forced to bid Beauty a hasty farewell; and as soon as he was mounted he went off at such a pace that she lost sight of him in an instant. Then Beauty began to cry, and wandered sadly back to her own room. But she soon found that she was very sleepy, and as she had nothing better to do she lay down and instantly fell asleep. And then she dreamed that she was walking by a brook bordered with trees, and lamenting her sad fate, when a young prince, handsomer than anyone she had ever seen, and with a voice that went straight to her heart, came and said to her:

"Ah, Beauty! you are not so unfortunate as you suppose. Here you will be rewarded for all you have suffered elsewhere. Your every wish shall be gratified. Only try to find me out, no matter how I may be disguised, as I love you dearly, and in making me happy you will find your own happiness. Be as true-hearted as you are beautiful, and we shall have nothing left to wish for."

"What can I do, Prince, to make you happy?" said Beauty.

"Only be grateful," he answered, "and do not trust too much to your eyes. And, above all, do not desert me until you have saved me from my cruel misery."

After this she thought she found herself in a room with a stately and beautiful lady, who said to her:

"Dear Beauty, try not to regret all you have left behind you, for you are destined to a better fate. Only do not let yourself be deceived by appearances."

Beauty found her dreams so interesting that she was in no hurry to awake, but presently the clock roused her by calling her name softly twelve times, and then she got up and found her dressing-table set out with everything she could possibly want; and when her toilet was finished she found dinner was waiting in the room next to hers. But dinner does not take very long when you are all by yourself, and very soon she sat down cosily in the corner of a sofa and began to think about the charming prince she had seen in her dream.

"He said I could make him happy," said Beauty to herself. "It seems, then, that this horrible Beast keeps him a prisoner. How can I set him free? I wonder why they both told me not to trust to appearances. I don't understand it. But, after all, it was only a dream, so why should I trouble myself about it? I had better go and find something to do to amuse myself."

So she got up and began to explore some of the many rooms of the palace.

The first she entered was lined with mirrors, and Beauty saw herself reflected on every side, and thought she had never seen such a charming room. Then a bracelet which was hanging from a chandelier caught her eye, and on taking it down she was greatly surprised to find that it held a portrait of her unknown admirer, just as she had seen him in her dream. With great delight she slipped the bracelet on her arm, and went on into a gallery of pictures, where she soon found a portrait of the same handsome prince, as large as life, and so well painted that as she studied it he seemed to smile kindly at her. Tearing herself away from the portrait at last, she passed through into a room which

contained every musical instrument under the sun, and here she amused herself for a long while in trying some of them, and singing until she was tired. The next room was a library, and she saw everything she had ever wanted to read, as well as everything she had read, and it seemed to her that a whole lifetime would not be enough even to read the names of the books, there were so many. By this time it was growing dusk, and wax candles in diamond and ruby candlesticks were beginning to light themselves in every room.

Beauty found her supper served just at the time she preferred to have it, but she did not see anyone or hear a sound, and, though her father had warned her that she would be alone, she began to find it rather dull.

But presently she heard the Beast coming, and wondered tremblingly if he meant to eat her up now.

However, as he did not seem at all ferocious and only said gruffly, "Good-evening, Beauty," she answered cheerfully and managed to conceal her terror. Then the Beast asked her how she had been amusing herself, and she told him all the rooms she had seen.

Then he asked if she thought she could be happy in his palace; and Beauty answered that everything was so beautiful that she would be very hard to please if she could not be happy. And after about an hour's talk Beauty began to think that the Beast was not nearly so terrible as she had supposed at first. Then he got up to leave her, and said in his gruff voice:

"Do you love me, Beauty? Will you marry me?"

"Oh! what shall I say?" cried Beauty, for she was afraid to make the Beast angry by refusing.

"Say 'yes' or 'no' without fear," he replied.

"No, no, Beast," said Beauty, hastily.

"Since you will not, good-night, Beauty," he said.

And she answered, "Good-night, Beast," very glad to find that her refusal had not provoked him. And after he had gone she was very soon in bed and asleep, and dreaming of her unknown prince. She thought he came and said to her:

"Ah, Beauty! Why are you so unkind to me? I fear I am fated to be unhappy for many a long day still."

And then her dreams changed, but the charming prince figured in them all; and when morning came her first thought was to look at the portrait and see if it was really like him, and she found that it certainly was.

This morning she decided to amuse herself in the garden, for the sun shone, and all the fountains were playing; but she was astonished to find that every place was familiar to her, and presently she came to the brook where the myrtle-trees were growing where she had first met the prince in her dream, and that made her think more than ever that he must be kept a prisoner by the Beast. When she was tired she went back to the palace, and found a new room full of materials for every kind of work—ribbons to make into bows, and silks to work into flowers. Then there was an aviary full of rare birds, which were so tame that they flew to Beauty as soon as they saw her, and perched upon her shoulders and her head.

"Pretty little creatures," she said, "how I wish that your cage was nearer to my room, that I might often hear you sing!"

So saying, she opened a door, and found to her delight that it led into her own room, though she had thought it was quite the other side of the palace.

There were more birds in a room farther on, parrots and cockatoos that could talk, and they greeted Beauty

by name; indeed, she found them so entertaining that she took one or two back to her room, and they talked to her while she was at supper; after which the Beast paid her his usual visit, and asked the same questions as before, and then with a gruff "good-night" he took his departure, and Beauty went to bed to dream of her mysterious prince. The days passed swiftly in different amusements, and after a while Beauty found out another strange thing in the palace, which often pleased her when she was tired of being alone. There was one room which she had not noticed particularly; it was empty, except that under each of the windows stood a very comfortable chair; and the first time she had looked out of the window it had seemed to her that a black curtain prevented her from seeing anything outside. But the second time she went into the room, happening to be tired, she sat down in one of the chairs, when instantly the curtain was rolled aside, and a most amusing pantomime was acted before her; there were dances, and colored lights, and music, and pretty dresses, and it was all so gay that Beauty was in ecstasies. After that she tried the other seven windows in turn, and there was some new and surprising entertainment to be seen from each of them, so that Beauty never could feel lonely any more. Every evening after supper the Beast came to see her, and always before saying good-night asked her in his terrible voice: "Beauty, will you marry me?"

And it seemed to Beauty, now she understood him better, that when she said, "No, Beast," he went away quite sad. But her happy dreams of the handsome young prince soon made her forget the poor Beast, and the only thing that at all disturbed her was to be constantly told to distrust appearances, to let her heart guide her, and not her eyes, and many other equally perplexing

things, which, consider as she would, she could not understand.

So everything went on for a long time, until at last, happy as she was, Beauty began to long for the sight of her father and her brothers and sisters; and one night, seeing her look very sad, the Beast asked her what was the matter. Beauty had quite ceased to be afraid of him. Now she knew that he was really gentle in spite of his ferocious looks and his dreadful voice. So she answered that she was longing to see her home once more. Upon hearing this the Beast seemed sadly distressed, and cried miserably:

"Ah! Beauty, have you the heart to desert an unhappy Beast like this? What more do you want to make you happy? Is it because you hate me that you want to escape?"

"No, dear Beast," answered Beauty softly, "I do not hate you, and I should be very sorry never to see you any more, but I long to see my father again. Only let me go for two months, and I promise to come back to you and stay for the rest of my life."

The Beast, who had been sighing dolefully while she spoke, now replied:

"I cannot refuse you anything you ask, even though it should cost me my life. Take the four boxes you will find in the room next to your own, and fill them with everything you wish to take with you. But remember your promise and come back when the two months are over, or you may have cause to repent it, for if you do not come in good time you will find your faithful Beast dead. You will not need any chariot to bring you back. Only say good-by to all your brothers and sisters the night before you come away, and when you have gone to bed turn this ring round upon your finger and say firmly: 'I wish to go back to my palace

and see my Beast again.' Good-night, Beauty. Fear nothing, sleep peacefully, and before long you shall see your father once more."

As soon as Beauty was alone she hastened to fill the boxes with all the rare and precious things she saw about her, and only when she was tired of heaping things into them did they seem to be full.

Then she went to bed, but could hardly sleep for joy. And when at last she did begin to dream of her beloved prince she was grieved to see him stretched upon a grassy bank sad and weary, and hardly like himself.

"What is the matter?" she cried.

But he looked at her reproachfully, and said:

"How can you ask me, cruel one? Are you not leaving me to my death perhaps?"

"Ah! don't be so sorrowful," cried Beauty; "I am only going to assure my father that I am safe and happy. I have promised the Beast faithfully that I will come back, and he would die of grief if I did not keep my word!"

"What would that matter to you?" said the prince. "Surely you would not care?"

"Indeed I should be ungrateful if I did not care for such a kind Beast," cried Beauty indignantly. "I would die to save him from pain. I assure you it is not his fault that he is so ugly."

Just then a strange sound woke her—some one was speaking not very far away; and opening her eyes she found herself in a room she had never seen before, which was certainly not nearly so splendid as those she was used to in the Beast's palace. Where could she be? She got up and dressed hastily, and then saw that the boxes she had packed the night before were all in the room. While she was wondering by what magic the Beast had transported them and herself to this strange

place she suddenly heard her father's voice, and rushed out and greeted him joyfully. Her brothers and sisters were all astonished at her appearance, as they had never expected to see her again, and there was no end to the questions they asked her. She had also much to hear about what had happened to them while she was away, and of her father's journey home. But when they heard that she had only come to be with them for a short time, and then must go back to the Beast's palace forever, they lamented loudly. Then Beauty asked her father what he thought could be the meaning of her strange dreams, and why the prince constantly begged her not to trust to appearances. After much consideration he answered: "You tell me yourself that the Beast, frightful as he is, loves you dearly, and deserves your love and gratitude for his gentleness and kindness; I think the prince must mean you to understand that you ought to reward him by doing as he wishes you to, in spite of his ugliness."

Beauty could not help seeing that this seemed very probable; still, when she thought of her dear prince, who was so handsome, she did not feel at all inclined to marry the Beast. At any rate, for two months she need not decide, but could enjoy herself with her sisters. But though they were rich now, and lived in a town again, and had plenty of acquaintances, Beauty found that nothing amused her very much; and she often thought of the palace, where she was so happy, especially as at home she never once dreamed of her dear prince, and she felt quite sad without him.

Then her sisters seemed to have got quite used to being without her, and even found her rather in the way, so she would not have been sorry when the two months were over but for her father and brothers, who begged her to stay, and seemed so grieved at the

thought of her departure that she had not the courage to say good-by to them. Every day when she got up she meant to say it at night, and when night came she put it off again, until at last she had a dismal dream which helped her to make up her mind. She thought she was wandering in a lonely path in the palace gardens, when she heard groans which seemed to come from some bushes hiding the entrance to a cave, and running quickly to see what could be the matter, she found the Beast stretched out upon his side, apparently dying. He reproached her faintly with being the cause of his distress, and at the same moment a stately lady appeared, and said very gravely: "Ah! Beauty, you are only just in time to save his life. See what happens when people do not keep their promises! If you had delayed one day more you would have found him dead."

Beauty was so terrified by this dream that the next morning she announced her intention of going back at once, and that very night she said good-by to her father and all her brothers and sisters, and as soon as she was in bed she turned her ring round upon her finger, and said firmly:

"I wish to go back to my palace and see my Beast again," as she had been told to do.

Then she fell asleep instantly, and only woke up to hear the clock saying, "Beauty, Beauty," twelve times in its mustical voice, which told her at once that she was really in the palace once more. Everything was just as before, and her birds were so glad to see her! But Beauty thought she had never known such a long day, for she was so anxious to see the Beast again that she felt as if supper-time would never come.

But when it did come and no Beast appeared she was really frightened; so, after listening and waiting for a long time, she ran down into the garden to search for

She Found the Beast Stretched Out Upon His Side

him. Up and down the paths and avenues ran poor Beauty, calling him in vain, for no one answered, and not a trace of him could she find; until at last, quite tired, she stopped for a minute's rest, and saw that she was standing opposite the shady path she had seen in her dream. She rushed down it, and, sure enough there was the cave, and in it lay the Beast—asleep, as Beauty thought. Quite glad to have found him, she ran up and stroked his head, but to her horror he did not move or open his eyes.

"Oh! he is dead; and it is all my fault," said Beauty, crying bitterly.

But then, looking at him again, she fancied he still breathed, and, hastily fetching some water from the nearest fountain, she sprinkled it over his face, and to her great delight he began to revive.

"Oh! Beast, how you frightened me!" she cried. "I never knew how much I loved you until just now, when I feared I was too late to save your life."

"Can you really love such an ugly creature as I am?" said the Beast faintly. "Ah! Beauty, you only came just in time. I was dying because I thought you had forgotten your promise. But go back now and rest, I shall see you again by and by."

Beauty, who had half expected that he would be angry with her, was reassured by his gentle voice, and went back to the palace, where supper was awaiting her; and afterward the Beast came in as usual, and talked about the time she had spent with her father, asking if she had enjoyed herself, and if they had all been very glad to see her.

Beauty answered politely, and quite enjoyed telling him all that had happened to her. And when at last the time came for him to go, and he asked, as he had so often asked before:

"Beauty, will you marry me?" she answered softly:

"Yes, dear Beast."

As she spoke a blaze of light sprang up before the windows of the palace; fireworks crackled and guns banged, and across the avenue of orange trees, in letters all made of fireflies, was written: "Long live the Prince and his Bride."

Turning to ask the Beast what it could all mean, Beauty found that he had disappeared, and in his place stood her long-loved prince! At the same moment the wheels of a chariot were heard upon the terrace, and two ladies entered the room. One of them Beauty recognized as the stately lady she had seen in her dreams; the other was also so grand and queenly that Beauty hardly knew which to greet first.

But the one she already knew said to her companion:

"Well, Queen, this is Beauty, who has had the courage to rescue your son from the terrible enchantment. They love each other, and only your consent to their marriage is wanting to make them perfectly happy."

"I consent with all my heart," cried the queen. "How can I ever thank you enough, charming girl, for having restored my dear son to his natural form?"

And then she tenderly embraced Beauty and the prince, who had meanwhile been greeting the fairy and receiving her congratulations.

"Now," said the fairy to Beauty, "I suppose you would like me to send for all your brothers and sisters to dance at your wedding?"

And so she did, and the marriage was celebrated the very next day with the utmost splendor, and Beauty and the prince lived happily ever after.

This French fairy tale is reprinted here by arrangement with the publishers, G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York. *Forty Famous Fairy Tales,* from which it is taken, is a well-chosen collection, and the stories themselves are virile and spirited.